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An historical view of the  
state of the Unitarian

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AN  
HISTORICAL VIEW  
OF THE  
S T A T E  
OF THE  
UNITARIAN DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP,  
FROM THE  
R E F O R M A T I O N  
TO OUR  
O W N T I M E S.

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE OBSTRUC-  
TIONS WHICH IT HAS MET WITH AT  
DIFFERENT PERIODS.

By THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, A.M.

L O N D O N :

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HISTORICAL VIEW

OF THE

UNITARIAN DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP

IN THE

UNITARIAN CHURCH

WITH A HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT

BY

JOHN

W. L. G. D. D.

LONDON

1841

THE

## P R E F A C E.

*Design of the work. Histories of virtuous sufferers in the cause of the Divine Unity; useful. Archdeacon Philpot and Socinus; alike deserving of censure. The term, Soci- nian, improperly applied. A blameable insi- nuation in the author of the "Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope;" rectified. The late Bishop of Bristol's censure; not to be passed over unnoticed. The author of "The Light of Nature pursued;" why so largely quoted. List of confessors to the sole wor- ship of the Father, the one only true God; in the established church.*

**I**N a small tract (a), not long ago pub- lished, in the way of dialogue, it was endeavoured to shew, from the holy Scrip- tures,

(a) "The Catechist: or an Inquiry into the doctrine of the Scriptures, concerning the only true God and ob- ject of religious worship." N. B. The title, CATE- CHIST, prefixed to the work, and which occurred to the



tures, that the One Almighty Father of the universe is the only God of christians. And a second part is intended to follow, in which, in the same familiar manner, all the passages of Scripture, supposed to favour the worship of Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, will be considered. And the writer has a good hope, that it will there easily be made to appear, that although Three Supreme equal Divine Persons, and a multitude of inferior demons or deities, have been for ages adopted into their rituals, and still continue to be worshiped by the greater part of christians : yet, the worship of *One Person*, of *One single First Cause*, and Author of all things, is not in itself an intricate problem, difficult to be made out and solved, in the Old Testament, or in the New :  
and

writer, from the idea of the famous *Origen* being *Catechist* of the church of Alexandria, has, it seems, misled and disappointed some persons ; as if it were a composition fitted only for very young persons ; whereas it was intended, whether it will answer the purpose others must judge, for those of mature age, who have not had sufficient leisure to attend to the subject ; not without striving at the same time, to make the whole plain to ordinary capacities.

and the deviations from it are easy to be accounted for (*b*) and explained.

In the present work, which was undertaken with a view to serve the same design, continual opportunities have offered themselves of illustrating different portions of the sacred writings, which relate to this Great Subject. And perhaps the *historical facts* intermixed, many of them little known, may attract a greater attention to it.

Those facts, it is apprehended, will be reckoned curious by such as wish to know

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what

(*b*) See the "History of opinions concerning Christ," in the first volume of Dr. *Priestley's* "History of the corruptions of Christianity." Of this admirable Work, worthy of the great name of its author, the writer would have spoken more at length, had less been said of himself in the dedicatory part of it. To be beloved and esteemed by the wise and good, is a spur and incitement truly to deserve it; and such he earnestly wishes may be the effect of his friend's over-partial regards.

One thing however he will venture to prognosticate, from Dr. Priestley's labours and those of others, to re-establish the true Scripture-idea of the person and character of Christ; that posterity, and he trusts not a late posterity, will look back upon the belief of *his* being the supreme God, or any thing but *the most excellent, perfect, human being*, with divine extraordinary powers, just in the same light as Protestants now view the Popish doctrine of *Transubstantiation*.



what passes, and has passed upon the stage of this world of ours, concerning a point of so sublime a nature; the diversity of opinions that have been entertained upon it, the warm passions it has excited, and the singular events to which it has sometimes given occasion: in whatever light they look upon the religion of Christ.

But to those who believe *that* religion to come from God, it is presumed, they will appear both important and curious.

The Play-book, and the Novel, (would that all of them were drawn by the chaste hand of *Addison's*, *Thomson's* or *Cecilia's* muse!) are, in proper place and time, needful to refresh and relieve the mind, fatigued and overplied with severer studies, or application to the world's necessary business; and may also well read many an useful moral lecture for the conduct of human life. But the history of virtuous, upright minds, and inquirers after truth, emerging out of the long night of antichristian darkness, seeking the great source of being and benevolent Father of all; and having found HIM, yielding themselves to tortures and death, rather  
 I than

than disown HIM (c), rather than not confess, and maintain, and declare to others, his transcendent majesty and excellency, and superiority to the things he has made;—presents the most instructive, awful, and animating spectacle and lesson, of all others; tending to inspire the reader with the like unshaken courage, and love of truth, and loyalty to the righteous and moral Governor of the world.

It would be great satisfaction, to be made an instrument, in any the least degree, to lead others out of the mazes of impenetrable mystery, and polytheism, to this *Parent Mind*,

“ To the First good, First perfect, and First fair,”

alone worthy of the highest love, adoration, and gratitude.

Connected with, and by the means of this light, and just representation of the One Supreme Being, it would be a no less desirable service, to shorten, and if possible, to abolish the gloomy reign of superstition over frail ignorant mortals; which, in particular, has

A 4

induced



induced too many of the mistaken followers of Christ, in all ages, to imagine they *did God service*, (Joh. xvi. 2.) by hating and destroying their fellow-creatures, who did not think of his incomprehensible deity, or of the nature and attributes of Jesus Christ, exactly in conformity with themselves.

MUCH therefore as Archdeacon *Philpot* is to be honoured, for nobly dying in defence of what he believed to be the truth of the gospel, under Queen Mary; it ought not, for the sake of others, to exempt him from the censure passed upon him, in the following pages (*d*), for his very unworthy behaviour towards some Unitarians of those days. It will also be seen, that no endeavours are used to conceal or palliate a similar (*e*) blameable conduct of *Socinus*, in his treatment of many persons, who agreed with him in believing Christ to be only a human being, favoured with divine extraordinary powers; but could not come up to his notion of worshiping and praying to him.

THE

(*d*) P. 80, &c.

(*e*) Ch. iii. Sect. 2. p. 194.

THE sample which is given of the disputation (*f*) upon this subject, which *Socinus* held with *Francis Davides*, will probably be acceptable to some persons, as it is not commonly known. There, and in other places, where it was judged proper to produce the words of the authors themselves, care has been taken to give an exact translation of them. *Davides*, who had been at first of a contrary sentiment, was imprisoned in consequence of his maintaining in public; “that prayer was not to be offered to Jesus Christ, but to God only.” His part in the controversy shews, that he had not receded from his former opinion, but on good grounds, and after well weighing the matter.

Mr. Toulmin’s plan, in his useful life of *Socinus*, would not allow him to descend into so minute and particular a detail on this point. What is here offered, may be considered as supplemental to his faithful representation of the opinions, and character of this eminent man; in piety and other virtues, not inferior to any of the Reformers; in sagacity and insight into the true meaning of



of the Scriptures, in many things oftentimes much beyond them; but who, alas, like all (g) of them, was tainted with a spirit of bigotry, and intolerance towards those who presumed to differ from him, on some favourite topics.

It will be very apparent, that those persons, in our own country, who are called *Socinians*, are far from being espousers of all *Socinus's* opinions. Or rather, as I can speak of myself, and as far as I know of others so called, they never borrowed their sentiments from him, but had embraced them before they had read a page in his works.

But if the name, *Socinian*, be given by way of reproach, singly for believing that Jesus Christ had no existence before he was born in the reign of Herod, king of Judea; then, although they would not willingly be called followers of *Socinus*, or of any one, but of Christ himself; yet they refuse not the appellation, but think it honourable: under a full persuasion, that Jesus Christ never professed himself to be a being of any other nature

(g) See "Memoirs of the life, character, sentiments, and writings of Faustus Socinus, by Joshua Toulmin, A. M." p. 112, &c.

ture than the human, and that his apostles never believed, or declared him to be any other.

It is high time to abstain from names of ill sound, when speaking of christians of different sentiments from ourselves; or else, to be extremely careful in cautioning others, not to associate any thing blameable or hateful with the name. For otherwise the evil done thereby, particularly, for instance, in the use of the terms, *Arian*, *Socinian*, will not soon or easily be repaired. For the orthodox, who have hitherto been the most numerous, Divines, Poets, Historians, being accustomed in all their writings, to characterize such persons, as *enemies to Christ*, *perverters* and *opposers of the gospel*, &c. the generality of christians hence fix these ideas to their characters, and seldom think or speak of them but with horror and detestation.

Whereas, all should be taught, that there is nothing in any opinion concerning Christ, which men are led into from the study of the holy Scriptures, that will lessen the divine favour towards them, but will on the contrary recommend them to it; and that at  
the



the last day, supposing they have thus fallen into any opinions that should be found to lessen the original dignity of Christ, they will not be on that account the less kindly received by him, their great appointed judge. For he will pass sentence upon them, not according to the opinions they have entertained of himself (which are matters of little account, so long as they have been honest and sincere in them) but *according to their* (Rev. xx. 13.) *works, whether they have done good* (Joh. v. 29.) *or whether they have done evil* in this their first probationary state.

I may here observe, for the honour of truth, and in vindication of a most worthy person, though it may not be perhaps quite so suitable in a preface, that a learned, ingenious writer, so lately as in 1782, should not have fallen in with the stream of popular prejudice in this respect, by affording *any place* in his amusing work, to an idle story of Dr. Clarke's repentance on his death-bed, for having published his work upon the Trinity.

In the last edition of the "Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope," Vol. ii. p. 121. the author, having spoken, in a note, of a correspondence between Mr. *Ramsay* and

and *Racine* the younger, on the subject of the *Essay on Man*; adds as follows :

“ There is a circumstance in the letter of Ramfay above mentioned, too remarkable to be omitted ; and which, some perhaps may be almost tempted to doubt the truth of. In a case of so delicate a nature, I chuse to quote the original. “ M. le Chevalier “ Newton, grand Geomètre, et nullement “ Métaphysicien, étoit persuadé de la vérité “ de la Religion : mais il voulut raffiner sur “ l’anciennes erreurs Orientales, et renou- “ vella l’Arianisme par l’Organe de son fa- “ meux disciple et interprete M. Clarke ; “ qui m’avoua quelque tems avant que de “ mourir apres plusieurs conferences que “ j’avois eues avec lui, combien il se re- “ pentoit d’avoir fait imprimer son ouvrage : “ je fus temoin, il y a douze ans, a Londres, “ des derniers sentimens de ce modeste et “ vertueux Docteur.”

Dr. *Warton* raises the curiosity of his readers much, to expect some charge that bore very hard against Dr. Clarke, by not taking upon him to hazard a translation of it. I shall here give it in English, having no doubt  
of



of being able to prove, that there is no truth in it.

“ Sir Isaac Newton, (says this Mr. Ram-  
 “ say) a profound mathematician, but no  
 “ metaphysician at all, was a sincere be-  
 “ liever in christianity; but being carried  
 “ away with a fondness to refine upon the  
 “ ancient heresies of the East, he revived  
 “ Arianism by the pen of his famous disci-  
 “ ple and interpreter Dr. Clarke; who  
 “ owned to me, some little time before his  
 “ death, after several conferences that I had  
 “ with him, that he greatly repented that  
 “ he ever published his work (*on the Tri-*  
 “ *nity*). I was witness twelve years ago,  
 “ that these were the last sentiments of this  
 “ modest and virtuous Divine!”

It is upon the face of the thing very in-  
 jurious to the memory of Dr. Clarke, with  
 no other proof than mere assertion, to make  
 him nothing better than Sir Isaac Newton's  
 Secretary, in what he published upon the  
 Trinity; as if he was not an original in the  
 opinions which he professed to deliver as his  
 own. It might however probably be an  
 hearsay story of the day, and take its rise  
 from the intimacy that subsisted between  
 those

those two great men. Mr. Whiston (i) has mentioned it, but does not appear to think there was any thing in it; and he must be allowed to be a more competent judge than Mr. Ramfay.

That however this gentleman's pretended interview and conversations with Dr. Clarke, and being the confident and depositary of his dying sentiments, is wholly without foundation, will be evident from the following facts.

1. Mr. *Emlyn*, than whom hardly any one had more of Dr. Clarke's confidence on these points, furnishes a proof within a very short time of the Doctor's death, of his not having changed his sentiments concerning the

(i) " A. D. 1705. About this time, or not much later, it was, that I discovered my friend Mr. *Clarke* had been looking into the primitive writers, and began to suspect, that the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity was not the doctrine of those early ages.—Whether Mr. *Newton* had given Mr. *Clarke* yet any intimations of that nature; for he knew it long before this time; or, whether it arose from some inquiries of his own, I do not directly know, though *I incline to the latter*.

" Historical Memoirs of the Life of Dr. S. *Clarke*,  
p. 7, 8. By Mr. Whiston."



the Trinity, which he had before published.

“ He once shewed me, says Mr. Emlyn,  
 “ (k) that he had been making some emen-  
 “ dations in his *Common-prayer* book; and  
 “ the very last time, I think, I ever saw  
 “ him, (the *March* before he died) and in  
 “ some of our last discourse at parting, he  
 “ asked me, if he had shewn me what he  
 “ had been doing in his *Common Prayer*. I  
 “ said I had just seen it once; he added,  
 “ that *it should not be lost*. With what de-  
 “ sign or view he had done it, he never said  
 “ to me.—But I hardly suppose he ever  
 “ finished the work, being so soon after  
 “ taken away from us. A few days before  
 “ his sickness in *May* 1729, I received a  
 “ letter from him about a private affair, but  
 “ before I could answer it, I heard first that  
 “ he was sick, and quickly after that he  
 “ was dead; and thus to my great grief a  
 “ sudden end was put to our friendly con-  
 “ verse, and all his intercourse with this  
 “ earth cut off.”

Now it is well known, that Dr. Clarke's  
 Amendments of the Common Prayer Book,  
 at

at present lodged in the British Museum, and frequently mentioned in the following work, contain nothing less than a retraction of his former opinions about the Trinity.

2. Bp. *Hoadly*, Dr. Clarke's very intimate friend, in his "Preface to his works, giving some account of the life, writings, and character of the Author" (p. xxxiv.) so describes the Doctor's last illness, as leaves no room for Mr. Ramfay being admitted to his bedside to have any conversation with him.

" On Sunday, May 11, 1729, he went  
 " out in the morning to preach before the  
 " Judges in Serjeant's Inn: and there was  
 " seized with a pain in his side, which made  
 " it impossible for him to perform the office  
 " he was called to, and quickly became so  
 " violent that he was obliged to be carried  
 " home. He went to bed, and thought  
 " himself so much better in the afternoon,  
 " that he would not suffer himself to be  
 " blooded: against which remedy he had  
 " indeed entertained strong prejudices. But  
 " the pain returning very violently about  
 " two the next morning, made the advice  
 " and assistance of a very able physician  
 a " absolutely



“ absolutely necessary : who, after twice  
 “ bleeding him, and other applications,  
 “ thought him, as he also thought himself,  
 “ quite out of all danger ; and so continued  
 “ to think, till the Saturday morning fol-  
 “ lowing : when, to the inexpressible fur-  
 “ prize of all about him, the pain removed  
 “ from his side to his head ; and, after a  
 “ very short complaint, took away his senses,  
 “ so that they never returned any more.  
 “ He continued breathing till between se-  
 “ ven and eight of the evening of that day,  
 “ *May 17, 1729*, and then died : and by  
 “ his death (let me be permitted to say it)  
 “ left the world destitute of as bright a  
 “ *light*, and as masterly a teacher of *truth*  
 “ and *virtue*, as ever yet appeared amongst  
 “ us.”

3. It happens luckily that we have some-  
 thing still more positive and decided, to op-  
 pose to this idle story of Dr. Clarke, a little  
 before his death, finding all he had written  
 upon the Trinity to have been wrong, and  
 condemning himself for it. For, a little  
 before, in the above cited Preface, p. xxvi.  
 Bishop Hoadly makes this remark :

“ One

“ One matter of fact I will add, that  
 “ from the time of Dr. *Clarke*’s publishing  
 “ this book, (his *Scripture doctrine* of the  
 “ *Trinity*) to the day of his death, he found  
 “ no reason, as far as he was able to judge,  
 “ to alter the notions which he had there  
 “ professed, concerning the Father, Son,  
 “ and Holy Ghost, towards any of those  
 “ schemes which seemed to him to dero-  
 “ gate from the honour of the *Father*, on  
 “ one side; or from that of the *Son*, and  
 “ *Spirit*, on the other. This I thought  
 “ proper just to mention, as *what all his*  
 “ *friends know to be the truth*. And indeed,  
 “ nothing to the contrary can be alleged,  
 “ without contradicting many express sen-  
 “ tences, scattered through all his works  
 “ which have followed, or will follow, the  
 “ forementioned *treatise*; evidently setting  
 “ forth, or implying, the same doctrine.”

We have nothing therefore to conclude,  
 but that this tale (1) of Dr. *Clarke*’s re-

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conversion

(1) It is the evidence which men bring from the Scrip-  
 tures, for their particular opinions; and not their name  
 or authority, that is of any weight: and least of all the  
 judgment which they form at going out of the world,  
 when

conversion to the orthodox opinion concerning the Trinity, too hastily admitted into his Book by Dr. Warton, and which is insinuated by the author of it as having been brought about in a good measure by his conferences with the Doctor, and the secret of which he intrusted to him alone when near his end, is nothing but an anecdote of Mr. Ramsay's own invention, contrived to ingratiate and make himself of consequence with his new popish friends on the other side of the water, to whose religion he had become a convert. And it is one humiliating instance, among others, that high mystic Pietists are wont to be above paying a strict regard to truth, when some good end, as they imagine, may be served by their deviating from it.

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when their reasoning powers in general are the weakest. It was well however, that Dr. Clarke's son was living, a few years ago, to contradict a like fabulous report of his father having died under great anxiety of mind, for having written his book upon the Trinity; which was propagated in the public prints, and much cherished and credited by some persons.—See Mr. *Clarke's* letter in "An Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick," p. 86, the *last* edition.



WHAT just occasion there was for the writer to take notice of the (*t*) censures of Dr. Newton, the late Bishop of Bristol; and of the solidity and truth of what he has advanced, others will judge. But I shall here take the liberty to correct a former inadvertence of my own, as I know not how to find a better place for it.

The Bishop, in his edition of Milton, had made this remark on a beautiful passage (*m*) of the *Paradise regained*; “How finely  
“and consistently does Milton here imagine  
“the *youthful meditations* of our Saviour!” Upon this it was (*n*) observed; that it was much to be wondered, that the expression, *youthful meditations* did not strike the worthy Commentator’s own mind, and lead him to reflect, that our Saviour could not be the supreme God, as he maintained; for that

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in

(*t*) Ch. iii. Sect. 3. p. 211.

(*m*) “When I was yet a child, no childish play  
To me was pleasing, all my mind was set  
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do  
What might be public good; myself I thought  
Born to that end, &c.”

*Paradise regained.* Book I.

(*n*) “Sequel to the Apology on resigning Catterick.”

p. 406. *note.*

in any union or connexion whatsoever, it could never be said that the *supreme eternal Being was (o) a child, or youth*. This passage however too easily persuaded me, that Milton was at that time come off his former orthodox sentiments, and was become a believer of the proper humanity of Christ; and I supposed this to be corroborated by a passage in his prose writings: but in which I was certainly mistaken.

I HAVE but ill represented my own feelings, if it does not appear from what I have said of the author (*r*) of “The light of “nature pursued,” how greatly I esteem his character, and value his writings. If I have blamed him, whom I think I have sufficiently proved to have been an enlightened *unitarian* christian, for being a voluntary advocate

(*o*) “Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, except-  
“ed against Mary being called Θεοτοκος, i. e. *the mother of*  
“*God*: because, as he argued, Mary was a woman, and  
“that therefore God could not be born of her; adding,  
“*I cannot call him God, who once was not above two or*  
“*three months old.*” Evagr. E. H. l. i. c. 2. Socr.  
l. vii. c. 32, 34.

See “Chandler’s History of Persecution.” Such just remarks must in time shake the strongest prejudices; and awaken christians to learn to distinguish between God and the creature.

(*r*) Ch. vi. Sect. 6. p. 404.

advocate for the continuance of *trinitarian* forms of worship, and for a regular attendance upon them, I have at the same time made his apology as far as I could, and so as to justify the purity of his intention, though his judgment therein is not to be approved. It was to make his work more read, and at the same time to prevent the harm, on his part wholly undesigned, that might ensue from such a principle and practice grounded upon it, becoming universal; that induced me to produce such large extracts from him. There is so much uncommon useful sense, true philosophy, and genuine piety and benevolence, scattered throughout his voluminous work, but not always under the best arrangement, that a judicious selection and abridgment of it, by an able hand, would be a serviceable present to the Public.

I SHOULD have been happy to have been able to have added the names only, of all the worthy persons, under similar circumstances with those mentioned in some of the last Sections ‡ of this book, believing it will be an acceptable part of the work to many.

One

‡ Ch. vii. Sect. 3. p. 473.



One name, in the University of Cambridge, of a gentleman well known, had I thought myself at liberty to mention it, would have much adorned the list. Some small part of his case and merits, is intimated at the close of the *note*, p. 393 ; but nothing is said of the great things that he has foregone, out of a principle of conscience, and preference of the word of God to *the doctrines and commandments* (Matth. xv. 9.) of men.

What a loss to human society, when such persons are excluded from being teachers of true religion and virtue in those famous seminaries ; instructors, not of one or two individuals only, but of successive numbers, in a long series, of ingenuous youth ; whose wide dispersion, and various future destinations might effectually contribute to spread light and truth through the world !

Whilst I am finishing this sheet, I have an account sent me from Wolverhampton, of the decease of my ingenious, amiable friend, Dr. Robertson, mentioned near the close of the following work. He was born in Dublin, October 16, 1705, and died May 20, 1783.

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	VIII.	58.	223—225.
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Acts	VII.	59.	49 — 53.
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## E R R A T A.

Page 53, line 3, after John vi. add ver. 7.

57, line 3 from the bottom, read *unlearned*.

217, line 8 from the bottom, for *F.* read *Thomas Randolph*.

293, dele "*Sect. I.*"

401, for Sect. IV. read Sect. V.

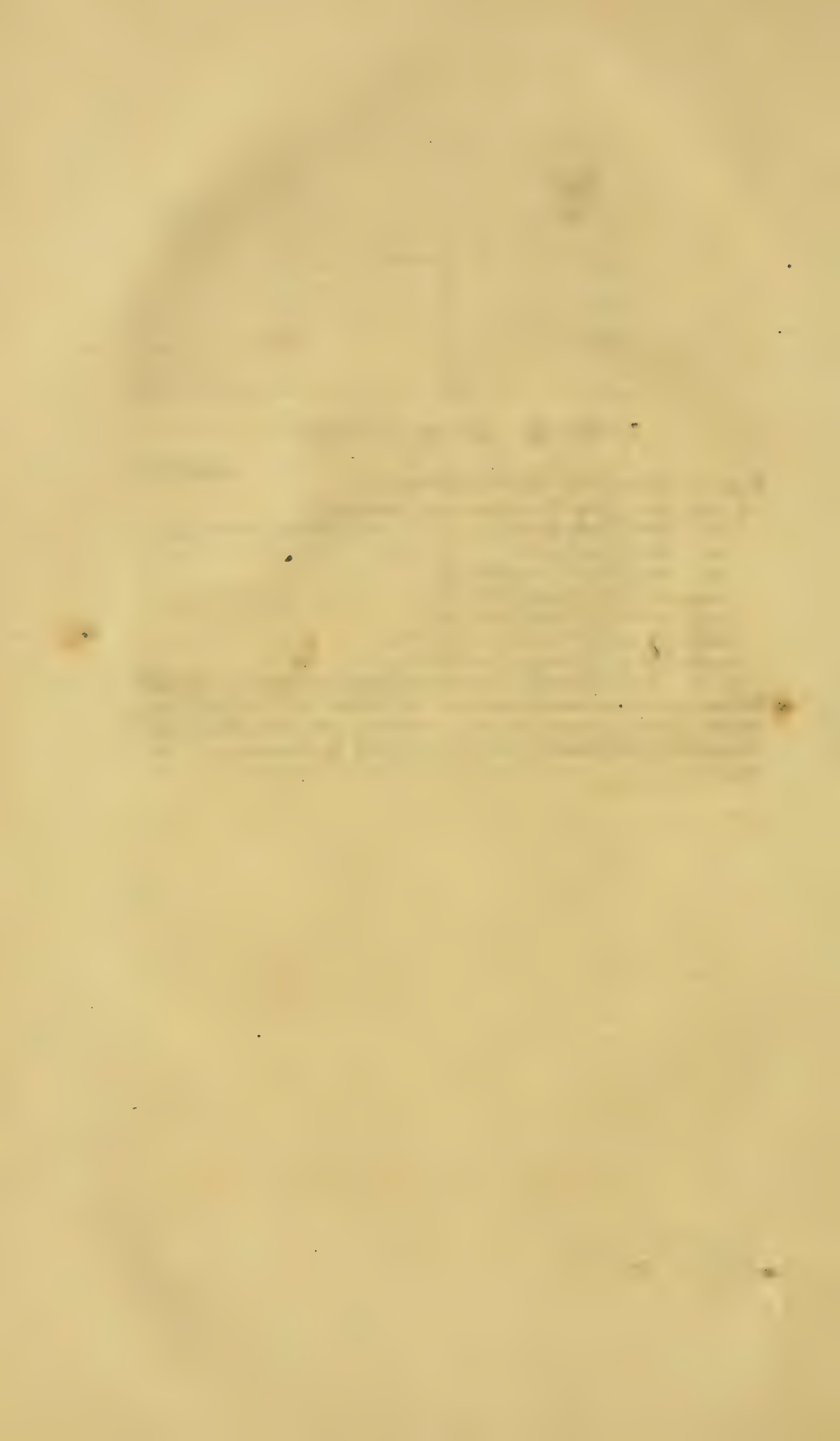
404, for Sect. V. read Sect. VI.

435, for Sect. V. read Sect. VII.

442, for Chap. VI. read Chap. VII.

462, line 9, for might, read would.

N. B. Sheet T. being mispaged, and the Impression printed off before the mistake was discovered, the Reader will be pleased to observe, that the matters referred to therein, are in the Index distinguished by the Sheet Mark being affixed to the number of the page.





## CHAPTER I.

*Of the State of the Unitarian Doctrine at the beginning of the Reformation, with some of the comparative advantages then enjoyed, for the understanding of the Scriptures in this respect, greater than at present.*

HAVING been long persuaded, from the most serious and diligent inquiry, of the supreme unrivalled majesty of the one God and Father of all, who is above all; (Eph. iv. 6.) and of the worship due to HIM alone (*a*) and to no other;

(*a*) In a valuable Work lately published, the title of the first Section is; "What our Lord teaches of *God the Father*:" and it concludes — "Such is *the God*,  
" — who is the *sole* object (Matth. iv. 10.  
" John iv. 23.) of our worship, service and prayer, and  
" the highest and best object of our imitation and  
" love."

Observations on our Lord's conduct as a Divine Instructor, &c. by William Newcome, D. D. Bishop of Waterford, 1782.

other; and at the same time convinced of the true character of the blessed Jesus, that which he continually and invariably gave and exhibited of himself, that he was the son, the messenger, the servant, the prophet, the humble and devout worshiper of the Father, the most high God, and not the most high God himself who was to be worshiped; I esteem myself happy in bearing testimony to these important truths, and in being engaged with other fellow-labourers in effecting among christians the recovery of the long lost truth of the *Divine Unity*: not doubting, but if undertaken with humble and upright views to God alone, it will be an acceptable labour and duty in the sight of HIM, who has declared, [Isaiah xlii. 8.] *that HE will not give HIS glory to another*; and who has severely forbidden [xlv. 5.] the comparing or equalling of any other Being or Person to Himself, *who is GOD alone*, [xlv. 5.] *and none else besides HIM*. I am also well assured, that it will tend to promote the virtue and happiness of mankind, by removing some otherwise unsurmountable obstacles to the propagation of the divine truth of the gospel. For while the unbeliever

unbeliever is confirmed in his rejection of it, by the weak superstition and idolatry of christians, in worshiping one of the human race, who suffered death under the Roman power, as the supreme God; as if God could die: the (b) Jew and the

(b) Says *Orobio*, in his amicable dispute with *Limborch* on the subject of Christianity, *Amica Collatio*, &c. p. 108. "Who-  
 " soever shall teach that he himself is to be worshiped; or  
 " that shall take upon him to deliver any command as from  
 " himself and not from God; or shall assert that God and  
 " himself were one and the same being: such a one is not  
 " a prophet, nor to be credited, or in any degree to be  
 " received as such." In another place, p. 110. "Israel  
 " alone of all the nations, has been taught of God himself,  
 " to know and acknowlege him, as an eternal, infinite,  
 " pure spirit, omnipresent, without body or figure, hav-  
 " ing none like to him, independent, incapable of death,  
 " suffering or change, and in all such things infinitely  
 " removed from all creatures.—But by the christian  
 " doctrine, God is held forth to be worshiped under the  
 " idea of a man: for it commands to worship *an incarnate*  
 " *God*, a *Man-God*, (for *the Word was made flesh*) and  
 " so makes him a visible being, of a limited figure, con-  
 " fined to one place. Quod vero sub idea hominis Deus  
 " adorandus proponatur, est christiana doctrina: quippe  
 " adorare præcipit *Deum incarnatum, hominem Deum*,  
 " (siquidem *Verbum caro factum est*) eumque facit visibi-  
 " lem, mensurabilem, loco conclusum."

These and most of the other objections of this learned Jew to the gospel, are not to be confuted upon the



the (c) Mahometan will ever be averſe to the doctrine of *three perſons being each of them god*, which directly contradicts the divine revelation given to the anceſtors

common Athanaſian ſyſtem, that Chriſt is the moſt high God, and to be worſhiped. Limborch therefore gives up theſe points in his reply, as being no part of Chriſt's doctrine, nor contained in the holy Scriptures : from which ſource alone, he tells Orobio (p. 296.) he ought to draw his arguments, and not from doctrines about which chriſtians themſelves are not agreed, and which the Scripture does not lay down as neceſſary to ſalvation.

(c) The following cenſure is paſſed upon the chriſtians of thoſe times, in the Koran of Mahomet, for their worſhip of Chriſt, and of his mother Mary. The paſſage is exceeding curious, and ſhews that this pretended prophet had ſtudied the chriſtian ſcriptures more attentively than many who call themſelves the diſciples of Chriſt.

“ And when God ſhall ſay unto Jeſus at the laſt day ;  
 “ O JEſUS, ſon of MARY, haſt thou ſaid unto men,  
 “ take me and my mother, for *two gods*, beſide GOD ?  
 “ He ſhall answer ; Praiſe be unto Thee ! it is not for me  
 “ to ſay that which I ought not. If I had ſaid ſo, Thou  
 “ wouldeſt ſurely have known it : Thou knoweſt what is  
 “ in me, but I know not what is in Thee ; for Thou art  
 “ the knower of ſecrets. I have not ſpoken unto them  
 “ any other than that Thou didſt command me ; namely,  
 “ *worſhip GOD ; my LORD, and your LORD* : and I was  
 “ a witneſs of their actions while I ſtaid among them ;  
 “ but ſince Thou haſt taken me to Thyſelf, Thou haſt  
 “ been the watcher over them ; for Thou art witneſs of  
 “ all things.”

Sale's Koran, p. 98. 4to Ed. Ch. V. near the end.

tors of the former, held by them both in the highest veneration; wherein it is most expressly taught that GOD is ONE; one single person; *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*, Exod. xx. 3. *The LORD our God is one LORD*, or *Jehovah our God, Jehovah is one*, Deut. vi. 4. Nor may it be passed by, for it has often been made an objection to the gospel, that the worship of three different persons, of such different characters as they are commonly considered and represented whom mistaken christians have for ages worshiped, has a tendency to produce (d) unfavourable effects on the morals and dispositions of their worshipers.

I am sensible that the plain religion of Jesus, stripped of these mysterious inexplicable doctrines, to which mankind have been so long wedded, is not likely to gain proselytes immediately. Too many are the more attached to them on account of their being hidden and obscure; imagining their faith to be thereby rendered more august and venerable; although it be a false grandeur which they admire. Christians must be better taught and informed,

(d) Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, p. 82, 83. and p. 96, 97. last Ed.

informed, freer from violent, narrow, early prejudices against others of differing sentiments, and more simplified in their ideas, before the true Unitarian doctrine of the Scriptures can be generally received. Among those also who have more light and knowledge, many are found cautious and shy of producing it, and afraid, from different motives, good or otherwise, of disturbing other people's minds, and putting them upon inquiry, and judging for themselves. And it is far more easy and pleasant for the multitude to think themselves already good christians, by believing or fancying they believe what is above their comprehension, than to become established in the truth by a painful examination of facts for themselves, *whether these things are so* [Acts xvii. 11.]; but of which even the unlearned are now at least capable in a sufficient degree, if they will apply themselves to it. It must moreover fix a wrong bias on the minds of numbers, so long as the belief of these mysteries is not only the road to honour and preferment in this world, in all christian countries, but is held necessary to men's final salvation in another, and so meritorious in the sight of God, as of itself, to entitle them to his favour, and



and atone for the want of piety, and a good life.

And yet notwithstanding these obstacles, there is abundant reason to rejoice, that the light of the knowlege of the glorious God, the great original, the sole creator, and benevolent author of all things, is breaking forth through the dark clouds that have hitherto so long intercepted it, and hindered HIM from being seen by the followers of Christ as HE really is; and that, within a century past, this great truth of revelation confirmed by nature's still and secret voice, that GOD is ONE, *one single ‡ Person*, and not (distracting thought!) *compounded of two or three Persons*, has been imperceptibly making progress in the breasts of many among us; and, in the present day, to their honour, some are not afraid or ashamed to come forth and openly confess it.

IN

‡ “ In a word, all other notions of the word *Person*,  
 “ besides the plain and obvious one, signifying *a real and*  
 “ *intelligent Agent*, have been already so excellently baffled  
 “ and learnedly confuted, that I am not able to resist the  
 “ shining evidence of truth : Nor am I ashamed to confess  
 “ my former *mistakes* and *errors* in these matters after  
 “ such strong irresistible conviction, seeing, *humanum est*  
 “ *errare*, all men are liable to error.”

Whitby's Last Thoughts, Preface.

**I**N the beginning of the xvith century, there was a noble stand made by many excellent persons, at the hazard of their lives, and to their great worldly loss, against the tyranny and impositions of the Bishop of Rome and his pretended authority over the christian world; when they made a partial reformation as far as they durst, or their lights went, and shook off and abandoned the idolatrous worship of their wafer-cake or god of bread, and of saints, and images, with some other superstitious doctrines and practices. But the learned leaders among these reformers never properly consulted the Scriptures themselves to know the Being they were to worship, but sat down satisfied in this respect, in a blind reverence of what had been handed down to them in creeds and other writings of christians of former ages, who had fashioned the gospel on this point in accommodation to their heathen  
pre-

prejudices and philosophy, or *science falsely so called*, as the apostle (1 Tim. vi. 20.) stiles it. They also took up an 'unhappy preference for the *creed*, which they erroneously ascribed to Athanasius, an ambitious turbulent prelate of the ivth century, though indeed it corresponded well with his doctrine and character; and all their learning was bent, as it has been too much the turn of divines ever since, to the present day, to torture and twist the Scriptures to the support of this doctrine.

In this *creed*, which was held sacred as the Scriptures themselves, or rather placed above them as containing a more full and exact account of the Deity than was to be found there; we have the following description given of God and his worship, by the writer, whoever he was, with the doom to eternal perdition denounced by him against all whose belief did not come up to his standard: *The catholic faith is this, that we worship One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity.—And this faith, except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.*

The



The composer of this creed was at full liberty to define and describe the object of his worship in what terms seemed fittest and best to himself. And those who adopt his sentiments cannot be blamed for expressing them in the same form of words. But neither he, nor any other person since the Apostles time, can have any right to draw up a form of belief for any but himself, and still less to annex the divine favour to those who embrace his particular opinions, and denounce damnation on those who dissent from them.

It was in a milder way, without such enigmatical language and menaces, that the holy Jesus, that heavenly teacher of men, pointed out the true object of worship, as well as the most acceptable manner of performing it, to the *woman of Samaria*, who had put some questions to him about it. Joh. iv. 22. &c. *Ye (Samaritans) worship what ye do not know. We (Jews, making himself, as he really was, one of them) worship what we do know: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the FATHER in spirit and in truth: for the FATHER seeketh such to*  
*worship*

worship HIM. We may say, without just cause of offence, that no unprejudiced christian will hesitate a moment, whether with the supposed Athanasius, he shall worship his *new invented god or gods in Trinity and Trinity in unity*, or the single gracious Parent of the universe, in the number of whose worshipers Jesus here professes himself.

The dreadful anathema however thrown out in this *creed*, that all who did not believe such a *Trinity in Unity*, were without doubt to perish everlastingly, being received and approved in all the christian churches, protestant as well as popish, and adopted and confirmed by the secular powers every where, became the source of furious resentments against those who would not subscribe to it, and of the unrelenting persecution of them. For such a false principle, and unworthy sentiment of the Great God and moral Governor of the world, being once imbibed, that the bare holding of this doctrine was of such vast consequence that all who refused it were to be for ever excluded from his mercy; those who controverted and opposed it would be looked upon as the most wicked of all beings, as setting themselves against,

and

and aiming to destroy that on which their own and the future salvation of all men depended, and nothing would be thought too severe or cruel that could be inflicted on them.

BUT although the generality of Divines at the Reformation, under all the civil establishments of religion, took this unfortunate Athanasian bias, if we may so call it, which has hung about them more or less ever since; there was no small number of learned men at the time, and also among those who were not bred to learned professions, who embraced and openly professed the Unitarian doctrine, and on that account became the victims of the religious rage of popish or protestant persecutors, as they happened to come under their power.

We find in different parts of Brandt's History of the Reformation in the Low Countries, that many of this liberal and inquisitive cast among the lower classes condemned also the use of Infant-baptism, being thence denominated Baptists, or (E) Anabaptists,

(E) " Upon Luther's first preaching in Germany,  
" there arose many, who building upon some of his prin-



baptists, and were the principal sufferers for religion among the protestants in the Low Countries, under Charles V. and under his son Philip, that haughty, cruel monster, never to be named without horror and detestation.

Mosheim (*e*) also bears testimony to the very early rise of men, under this denomination, who were Unitarians, and makes mention of one in particular, who openly denied the Divinity of Christ, soon after Luther made his appearance.

Of these Anabaptists, part were properly Arians, i. e. who believed Christ to be a creature;

“ ciples, carried things much farther than he did. The  
 “ chief foundation that he laid down, was, that the  
 “ Scripture was to be the only rule of Christians. Upon  
 “ this many argued, that the mysteries of the Trinity,  
 “ and Christ’s Incarnation and sufferings, &c. were in-  
 “ deed philosophical subtilties, and only pretended to be  
 “ deduced from Scripture, as almost all opinions of re-  
 “ ligion were; and therefore they rejected them. Among  
 “ these, the baptism of Infants was one. They held that  
 “ to be no baptism; and so were rebaptised: But from  
 “ this, which was most taken notice of, being a visible  
 “ thing, they carried all the general name of Anabap-  
 “ tists.”

Burnet’s Hist. of Reform. Vol. I. p. 105.

(*e*) Ecclesiastical History, Vol. IV. p. 169.

creature ; but created before the formation of the world. Others among them adopted the opinion of the proper humanity of Christ, which was afterwards embraced by Socinus.

We are much obliged to this last historian, for furnishing us with authentic memorials of the sentiments of the latter sort of Anabaptists, taken from one of their Catechisms, or Confessions of Faith, printed in (*F*) Poland in 1574 ; that is, four years before Faustus Socinus came into that country.

The

(*F*) Mosheim gives the following account of the great number of Unitarians that were found in Poland at this time ; which does not reflect much credit on their fellow-christians of all denominations, whose cruel persecuting spirit forced them to take refuge in that country. “ There  
 “ were certain sects and doctors, against whom the zeal,  
 “ vigilance and severity of Catholics, Lutherans, and  
 “ Calvinists, were united, and in opposing whose settle-  
 “ ment and progress, these three communions, forgetting  
 “ their dissensions, joined their most vigorous counsels and  
 “ endeavours. The objects of their common aversion,  
 “ were the *Anabaptists*, and those who denied the *Divinity*  
 “ of Christ, and a *Trinity of Persons* in the Godhead. To  
 “ avoid the unhappy consequences of such a formidable  
 “ opposition, great numbers of both classes retired into  
 “ *Poland*, from this persuasion, that in a country whose  
 “ inhabitants were passionately fond of freedom, religious  
 “ liberty could not fail to find a refuge.”

Vol. IV. p. 178.

The spirit of piety which it breathes, its simplicity and agreeableness to the Scriptures, cannot fail to recommend it to every unprejudiced mind, especially when contrasted with that most unedifying form and confession, which our first Reformers idolized so much, the ill effects of which we have been discussing.

(f) “ The *Preface*, which is composed in the name of the whole congregation, begins with the following salutation :

“ *To all those who thirst after eternal salvation, the LITTLE and AFFLICTED FLOCK in Poland, which is baptized in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, sendeth greeting; praying most earnestly that grace and peace may be shed upon them, by the ONE supreme GOD and FATHER, through his only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who was crucified.*”

“ After this general salutation, the *Prefacers* give an account of the reasons that engaged them to compose and publish this Confession. The principal of these reasons was, the reproaches and aspersions  
“ that

(f) Mosheim, Ecclesiastical History, Vol. IV. p. 183, &c. note.



“ that were cast upon the *Anabaptists* in se-  
 “ veral places ; from which we learn, that  
 “ at this time, the denomination of *Ana-*  
 “ *baptists* was given to those, who in after  
 “ times were called *Socinians*.”——“ In  
 “ their definition of the *Nature of God*,  
 “ with which this Catechism begins, the  
 “ authors discover immediately their senti-  
 “ ments concerning *JESUS CHRIST* ; by  
 “ declaring that “ *he, together with all*  
 “ *other things, is subject to the supreme*  
 “ *Creator of the universe.*”

“ Their (g) sentiment concerning *JESUS*  
 “ *CHRIST* is expressed in the following  
 “ terms : *Our mediator before the throne of*  
 “ *GOD is a man, who was formerly promised*  
 “ *to our fathers by the prophets, and in these*  
 “ *latter days was born of the seed of David,*  
 “ *and whom GOD, the Father, has made Lord*  
 “ *and Christ, that is, the most perfect pro-*  
 “ *phet, the most holy priest, and the most*  
 “ *triumphant king ; by whom he created the*  
 “ *NEW world, by whom he has sent peace*  
 “ *upon earth, restored all things, and recon-*  
 “ *ciled*

(g) Mosheim calls it, *their erroneous notion*, which I  
 have taken the liberty to alter, but not without reminding  
 the reader of it.

“ ciled them to himself, and by whom also he  
 “ has bestowed eternal life upon his elect : to  
 “ the end that, after the supreme God, we  
 “ should believe in him, adore and invoke (b)  
 “ him, hear his voice, imitate his example,  
 “ and find in him rest to our souls.”

“ With respect to the *Holy Ghost*, they  
 “ plainly deny his being a *divine Person*,  
 “ and represent him as nothing more than a  
 “ divine quality or virtue, as appears from  
 “ the following passage : *The Holy Ghost is*  
 “ *the energy or perfection of God, whose ful-*  
 “ *ness, God, the Father, bestowed upon his*  
 “ *only begotten Son, our Lord ; that we,*  
 “ *becoming his adopted children, might receive*  
 “ *of his fulness.*”

THESE *Anabaptists* were a very different  
 sort of men (i) from those wild fanatics of  
 the

(b) N. B. It was an opinion, taken up without sufficient grounds by these early Unitarians, that Christ, although held by them to be only a human creature, was to be worshiped and invoked in prayer.

(i) Brandt (Vol. I. p. 58.) gives us Erasmus's testimony to the harmless commendable character of these first Anabaptists. “ He (Erasmus) was particularly scan-

the same name, though some few were at first connected with them, who, in the year 1533, in Germany, and afterwards in Holland, brought discredit on the doctrine of the Divine Unity, and calamity on its professors, as well as hurt the whole cause of the Reformation, by their horrid opinions and practices; maintaining *that the elect* (i. e. themselves) *only had a right to govern the world*; (in the phrase of the schools, *that dominion was founded in grace*) *that marriage was not to be contracted but with the saints*; *that polygamy was lawful*, &c. &c.

The

“ dalized at the persecutions which the Zuinglians raised  
 “ against the Anabaptists: for it was about the same time  
 “ that those of Zurich had ordained by a second decree,  
 “ that the Anabaptists should no where be tolerated within  
 “ their Canton, but taken up, in order to be brought to  
 “ capital punishment. They insist and argue, says he,  
 “ that heretics ought not to be punished with death, whereas  
 “ they themselves inflict the same upon the Anabaptists,  
 “ a people against whom there is very little to be said,  
 “ and concerning whom we are assured, that there are  
 “ many who have been reclaimed from the most vicious  
 “ practices and reformed; and though perhaps they may  
 “ foolishly err in certain opinions, yet have they never  
 “ stormed towns or churches; nor entered into any com-  
 “ binations against the authority of the magistrate, nor  
 “ driven any one from his government or estate.”



The spreading of the true doctrine of the divine Unity at this time, among many who had not enjoyed the benefit of a learned education, was mightily promoted by the Scriptures, in the several countries of Europe, being put into the mother-tongue and printed, when, being intirely new to them, they were read with the greatest avidity and attention. And although they were handed to them somewhat tinctured with the prejudices of the learned Athanasian Divines who translated them, and a proper search into the original manuscripts of the New Testament had not led them to see some mistakes that had crept into the sacred volumes, by the ignorance or carelessness of the transcribers; in those passages, for instance, of Acts xx. 28. and 1 John iii. 16. which speak of the *blood of God*, and of *God laying down his life*, and some others of the like kind: yet the more faithful and exact publications and latin paraphrase and translation of the New Testament by Erasmus, that great light and ornament of the christian world, who was of a more candid and liberal spirit in this respect than Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, and the other Re-

C 2

formers,

formers, had opened somewhat of a freer vein of inquiry into these points; which, on his works being translated and more generally known, diffused itself among the common people, who gladly pursued the track of light which he had pointed out, while the learned were overawed, and kept back in their ancient darkness and errors by their prejudices or worldly fears. This was exemplified particularly among the Dutch, his countrymen, many of whom, of all ranks were led to see from the Bible, that there was but One God, the Father of mankind, and of all beings; and that Jesus was his highly favoured and beloved son: and some of them suffered the most cruel deaths, in our own and other countries, with great constancy, rather than acknowledge Christ, or any other person, to be God, but the Father only.

There is a curious dialogue preserved by Brandt, betwixt an Anabaptist, and a Franciscan Frier, of Dort, which shews of what vast service the writings of Erasmus had been in opening the eyes of the laity, and the reason his memory was so much execrated by the monks and priests, who wanted to keep all in darkness. I shall transcribe  
a part

a part of it, as it will by no means break the thread of our argument, but rather strengthen and confirm it, though the date of the transaction in 1569 be somewhat posterior to the times we are treating of.

(k) “ *A conference between HERMAN VAN FLEKWISK, an Anabaptist, and CORNELIUS ADRIANS, a Franciscan Frier.*

“ *Cornelius.* But do you not then believe that Christ is *the second Person of the holy Trinity?*

*Flekwise.* We know not how to call things otherwise than they are named in the holy Scriptures.

*Cornel.* Is there not mention made in the holy Scriptures of *God the Father, of God the Son, and of God the Holy Ghost?*

*Flekwise.* The Scriptures speak only of ONE God, and of the Son of the LIVING God, and of the Holy Ghost.

*Cornel.* If you had but read the creed of St. Athanasius, there you would have met with *God the Father, God the Son, and God the*

(k) History of the Reformation in the Low Countries, Vol. I. b. 10. p. 282, &c.



*the Holy Ghost* : which *three Persons* are by him stiled *the one true God*.

*Flekw.* I am not versed in the *Athanasian* creed : it is enough for me, to believe in the *living God*, and that *Christ is the Son of the living God*, as Peter (Matth. xvi. 16.) believed ; and to believe in the *holy Ghost*, which the Father shed on us abundantly, through *Jesus Christ our Saviour*, as Paul (Titus iii. 5, 6.) testifies.

*Cornel.* You are a pretty fellow truly, to imagine that God should shed his holy Spirit on you, that do not believe that the holy Ghost himself is God. But you borrow these *heretical* opinions from the *devilish* books of that *damned* Erasmus of Rotterdam : who, in his preface to the works of St. Hilary, pretends that the holy man, in the end of his twelfth book, said, *that the holy Ghost is no where in the Scripture stiled God* : but we are so bold as to call him God, whereas the (first) fathers of the church scrupled to do it. Will you be a follower of that *Trinitarian* ?” meaning *Antitrinitarian*.

*Flekw.*

*Flekw.* We neither follow Erasmus, nor Hilary, but the holy Scriptures; as they likewise do.

*Cornel.* But though the holy Ghost be not called God in any part of the Scriptures, what matters that? The holy Ghost has instructed our mother, the Church, to call him God, as appears by the *Athanasian* creed.——You must not pretend to teach me. For I say again, the *second Person in the godhead, or holy Trinity, was made man*, whom you refuse to call God.

*Flekw.* I call him *the Son of the living God*, as did also Peter; and, *the Lord*, as the rest of the apostles stile him. And so again, in the Acts of the Apostles, he is called (Acts ii. 22. 24.) *Jesus of Nazareth, whom God hath raised up*; and by Paul (Acts xvii. 31.) *that man, by whom GOD will judge the world in righteousness*.

*Cornel.* But, you, Antitrinitarian! St. John says (1 Ep. ver. 7.) *there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one*.

*Flekw.* I have often heard say, that Erasmus, in his annotations upon this place,

proves that this text is not in the *Greek*, or original language."

" Upon this, says the historian, the monk *Cornelius*, turning to the secretary and clerk of the Inquisition, who were present at this dialogue, said to them; Gentlemen, what think you of this matter? Am I to blame for opposing so often in my sermons, that wicked, that damned Antitrinitarian, Erasmus? For it is true; he does indeed write so; &c. &c."

THROUGHOUT the whole of this *dialogue*, (for much of it is omitted) it is seen how far, with the few helps to be had at that time, persons of plain sense and integrity, might attain a right understanding of the Scriptures, in points supposed to be the most abstruse and difficult; and by comparing together the several parts of those sacred writings in order to come at their true meaning, easily become an overmatch for those who could only support their arbitrary unscriptural positions, by human authority and the sophistry of the schools. To their honest artless minds, the uniform language of the  
Bible



Bible throughout, invariably speaking of the Deity, as ONE, *one single Person* or Being; as having *no other equal to, or to be compared with HIM*, would be intirely satisfactory, that HE was indeed *one single Person*, and not *made up of two or three Persons*.

And in like manner, with respect to Christ; they would well conclude that they were not to be guided in their sentiments concerning him, by a few particular texts and expressions, which they would perceive from Erasmus's writings, might not be truly represented to them; but that they were to form their opinions of him from his own constant declarations, *who he was*; and those of his apostles, who knew his history, and were best acquainted with him.

When they observed him *always*, with deepest reverence, speaking of God as his Father; and telling his disciples after he was raised from the grave, that he considered them as his *brethren*, and that *he had the same God* (John xx. 17.) *and Father* to depend upon and trust in that they had; they would be persuaded, without the shadow of doubt, that he was the creature and offspring of the Great God, as they themselves were.

When

When he said, (John v. 30.) *I can of mine ownself do nothing : (vi. 16.) My doctrine is not mine, but HIS that sent me.* From these and the like solemn references to almighty God, they would perceive that this humble Saviour would have it to be understood, that as he received his existence from him, so his wisdom and extraordinary powers were also the gift of God.

When, with that modesty and humility which never forsook him, whenever his own name was mentioned along with that of God; *Jesus said, Mark xiii. 32. Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father :* they would have no doubt but that he spake the truth, and was in real ignorance of that period of time, which was known only to God.

If there were any passages of Scripture at apparent variance with these direct and repeated accounts of Christ given by himself, of his being what he was from God, and depending upon him for every thing; they would have little doubt but that such contrarieties might be reconciled, and every part of scripture shewn to be in agreement with  
each

each other, by an honest state of the case. This they had frequently observed to have been done in the writings of their countryman Erasmus; and particularly in that text, (*Romans ix. 5.*) where it was commonly read, *Christ, who is over all God blessed for ever, Amen:* but which, in another part of the foregoing dialogue, Flekwisk asserted very justly to be spoken of God and not of Christ; and that it should be read, *God who is over all be blessed for ever, Amen:* which Erasmus had proved to be a translation consonant to the original *Greek* and the style of the apostle.

BUT this happy state of things so favourable to the progress of truth and free inquiry, did not long continue. Among those who separated from the church of Rome, the Bible soon became a book sealed up and hidden from the laity and the unlearned, from all who chose to submit to those who took upon them to be their guides: not indeed by forbidding the reading of the scriptures, as in former times under the papacy, but by throwing a veil over them, and di-

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verting



verting men from searching into them fairly to see what they truly did teach, especially in what related to the Divine Unity, and the real character of Christ.

For from that period to the present day, in all protestant communities, in the churches of Scotland and England, and among Lutherans and Calvinists upon the continent, their first care and principal labour has been bestowed in securing and guarding the Athanasian doctrine of three persons making one God, by composing public Confessions, Articles of faith and Catechisms, for this purpose; to which all ministers of religion were bound to subscribe, and conform their public teachings and preaching, at their peril.

According to these prescribed formularies, youth were to be taught the elements of christianity; and instead of laying the greatest weight, where Christ laid it, on piety to God, love and kindness to men, and integrity and sincerity in their whole conduct: certain mysterious doctrines, particularly concerning Christ being the most high God, were recommended and insisted on as the very foundation of the gospel, without which the whole fabric must fall to the ground.

And

And they were instructed to look upon those who held the contrary sentiments with horror, as persons whose conversation was to be shunned and avoided ; and for a long time no State would tolerate such men, or allow them to worship God in their own way, and sometimes would not permit them to stay in their country.

Public lectures have been established and stipends annexed to the preachers of them, not to encourage men in the study of the Scriptures, and in interpreting them in the sense that approved itself to their own judgments, but in agreement with that which was dictated by others. Such is the Lady Moyer's lecture in this metropolis, with some appointments of the like sort among Dissenters. And such is that more recently instituted in the University of Oxford by Mr. Bampton (*L*).

The authorized forms of prayer or liturgies in use in all the established churches of  
Europe,

(*L*) Extract from the last Will and Testament of the late Rev. John Bampton, Canon of Salisbury.

“ I give and bequeath my Lands and Estates to the  
“ Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of  
“ Oxford for ever—————to the endowment of Eight  
“ Divinity

Europe, are all framed on this plan; in which two other persons are worshiped as gods, together with the supreme Father, who is God alone, blessed for ever. And private manuals of devotion, as might be expected, of course speak the same language. From these circumstances with others that might be enumerated, it is evident, that supposing the doctrine of the Divine Unity to be the truth, it is at the least full as difficult in all the great civil establishments of christianity to come at the knowledge of it now, not only for the unlearned but for christians in general,

“ Divinity Lecture Sermons, to be established for ever in  
 “ the said University, and to be performed in the manner  
 “ following :

“ I direct and appoint that upon the first Tuesday in  
 “ Easter Term, a Lecturer be yearly chosen by the Heads  
 “ of Colleges only and by no others, to preach Eight  
 “ Divinity Lecture Sermons the year following at St.  
 “ Mary’s in Oxford, the last month in Lent Term and  
 “ the End of the third week in Aët Term.

“ Also I direct and appoint, that the Eight Divinity  
 “ Lecture Sermons shall be preached upon either of the  
 “ following subjects—to confirm and establish the Chris-  
 “ tian Faith and to confute all Heretics and Schismatics—  
 “ upon the Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures—  
 “ upon the Authority of the Writings of the primitive  
 “ Fathers



general, as it was at the beginning of the Reformation.

But what is chiefly to be lamented, because therein writers seem to have been left more at liberty; learned and worthy men, who have taken laudable pains in illustrating the sacred writings, have not been sufficiently attentive and disengaged from narrow prejudice in their commentaries and annotations, so as to give the plain and just sense of those writings; but have discovered a laboured partiality to interpret every thing exactly in conformity to the Athanasian doctrine, maintained in the church of Rome, and embraced by all

“ Fathers as to the faith and practice of the primitive  
 “ Church—upon the Divinity of our Lord and Saviour  
 “ Jesus Christ—upon the Divinity of the Holy Ghost—  
 “ upon the Articles of the Christian Faith as comprehended  
 “ in the Apostles and Nicene Creeds.

“ Also I direct, that thirty Copies of the Eight Divinity  
 “ Lecture Sermons shall be always printed within two  
 “ months after they are preached;—and the Preacher  
 “ shall not be paid, nor be entitled to the Revenue before  
 “ they are printed.”

See the Introductory Matter before Dr. Bandinel's  
 Eight Sermons, preached in the year 1780, at the  
 Lecture founded by the late Rev. and pious John  
 Bampton, M. A. Canon of Salisbury.

The clear income of Mr. Bampton's Estate amounts to  
 about 120/. per Ann.

all the protestant churches that separated from her.

Of this forced construction and wresting of the Scriptures from their true meaning to favour the fashionable and received opinions, I shall produce a few instances ; as it corresponds directly with my design in writing ; and shall contrast them with the better example of Erasmus 250 years ago under the papacy, which but very few protestants since have had the courage and virtue to follow. For, whatever were his private sentiments concerning Christ, Athanasian ; or Arian, as they have been commonly presumed : however dangerous it might be to him to give a different turn to passages which were usually supposed to favour the orthodox doctrine, or however advantageous to fall in with it in all respects : we never find him straining the words of scripture all one way, to serve a particular purpose ; but honestly, and without leaning to one side or the other, he gives what appeared to him to be the real words and the true sense of the sacred writers.

I PROFESS a great respect for the memory of the late Dr. Doddridge of Northampton,

though in person wholly unknown to me. He will always be honourably distinguished from ordinary men, by his eminent piety, modesty, and amiable social qualities, besides his learning and labours in the instruction of youth in literature and religion. His “ Family Expofitor, or Paraphrafe and Version “ of the New Testament,” must have cost him prodigious pains, and is a very valuable work; sincerely intended by him, and in itself calculated to promote piety and the knowlege of the gospel. I wish I could equally praise him as a just and fair Expofitor of the Scriptures in all points, without prepossession (1), and indifferent in his re-  
searches

(1) “ If I have hit upon any truth, it is wholly to be “ attributed to my indifferency in such searches to embrace “ whatsoever I should find, without any regard whether it “ were for the advantage of one side or other; and not to “ any ability beyond others.” *Mede's Works*, p. 881. Ep. xcvi. To this great scholar, and humble man, of such a generous love of truth, it was given to throw singular light on that most intricate of all our sacred books, *the Revelation of St. John*. And him also we have to thank, in these latter days, for first opening the way to rectify the sentiments of christians, with respect to the *Demons* and *possessions*, which we meet with at every turn in the gospel history; which have prejudiced many persons against the



searches into them, on whatever side the truth should lie. But this I am forbidden by his manifest bias and aim, which he is at no pains to conceal, to turn every passage in favour of the popular doctrine, however difficult to make them bend to it. This is particularly seen in his dexterous use of metaphysical scholastic language, and subtilties, unknown to the sacred writers, when he would explain away the true meaning of those texts, which speak of Christ as an inferior being, and a creature of God.

As his *Family Expofitor* is in great request with the members of the church of England, as well as those who have separated themselves from it, and contributes to keep many from the true knowlege of God and of Christ,

whole of it. So that it is now clear and evident, to the satisfaction of impartial inquirers, that there was no real possession of evil spirits in the case, but that what is so called, was merely a description of certain persons under certain violent diseases, epilepsie, insanity, &c. in the common language of the jewish people; who had learned of the heathens, during their captivities among them, to ascribe such diseases to the influence of demons, *i. e.* of the *supposed* spirits of dead men deified. To this language our Saviour of necessity conformed himself in speaking of such diseases, if he would be understood by his countrymen.

Christ, by his strained interpretation of the Scriptures to accommodate them to the Athanasian doctrine, though in other parts it may be read with much information and profit ; I shall point out a few out of the many blemishes of this kind, with which it abounds.

Mark xiii. 32. *But of that day and that hour knoweth no man ; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father : or (Matth. xxiv. 36.) my Father only.*

Dr. Doddridge's paraphrase runs thus :

“ But of that great decisive day, there is  
 “ no one who knows the precise time, nei-  
 “ ther the angels in heaven, neither the *Son*  
 “ of man himself, with respect to his human  
 “ nature, or as a part of what he is com-  
 “ missioned to reveal ; for though it be de-  
 “ termined by the Divine decree, it is not  
 “ known to any but my Father alone, or  
 “ *the indwelling godhead.*”

*Observation.* Instead of the term *Son*, which our Lord uses *absolutely*, and thereby evidently denotes his whole person, and thereby likewise describes himself in his highest

character as *Son of God*; the Doctor changes it to *Son of man*, to favour his notion of Christ possessing two natures, a divine and human nature, so compounded as to make him God and man at the same time; and this also, that he might be able to say that Christ here spoke only with respect to his human nature. By which management he makes our Lord assert, that *he did not know a thing*, the day of judgment for instance, *as man*, or as such was not commissioned to reveal it, whilst at the same time *he really did know it as God*. And then after all to finish this dark business, which at the best has but a very ugly appearance, a new name is invented for the Father, styling him, *the indwelling godhead*.

To such quibbling arts, which reflect no small dishonour on Christ's character, and to the use of these scholastic unintelligible terms, are they reduced, who want support for a twofold or threefold deity of their own invention, not content with the single ever blessed Parent of the universe, *who is God alone, and no other besides HIM*.

Erasmus thus fairly gives the sense of our Saviour's words in his paraphrase upon them,



without any such reserve or refinement, and without regarding whether it made for or against the doctrines in vogue. “ Be ye not  
 “ carefull to know certaynely when that  
 “ same last day shall cum, forasmuche as it  
 “ is not geven unto the angels to knowe it :  
 “ no nor yet to the Sonné himself. For  
 “ the Father hath reserved this secrete  
 “ knowlege to himself alone.” I keep to the old English translation, made in the reign of Edward VI. and by him recommended to be in the studies of Divines. Q. Elizabeth, in the beginning of her reign, ordered it to be put in all parish-churches for all persons to read it.

John xiv. 28.—*For my Father is greater than I.* Our Lord says this, not with a view of comparing himself to God; for such a thought could never enter into his humble and pious mind: but perceiving his chosen disciples overwhelmed with sorrow and dejection on account of his being soon to be taken away from them, for their encouragement, he tells them, that they ought rather to rejoice, as it would be a happy change to

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himself,

himself, and also as he should leave them in the hands of a far more powerful friend and protector—*for my Father is greater than I.*

Dr. Doddridge's paraphrase upon the words is ;—for my Father, *whose servant I am as Mediator, is in that respect* greater than me.

This is not to interpret, but to pervert and contradict the words of Christ.

For he says of himself, without any limitation, *my Father is greater than I.* No: replies Dr. Doddridge; it is not intirely and absolutely so. The Father is not greater than Christ, but in one respect. Had any one of those who were present, when our Lord uttered these words, the forward disciple Peter, for example, stood forth, and told him; that what he had spoken of his own inferiority was true only in one respect, and that otherwise, he was *as great as his Father, as great as God himself*; it may be left to the reader to imagine, what answer the apostle would have received from his master.

Not so Erasmus. He never takes such liberty with our Lord's words, to suppose he did not really mean what he said. “Ye are  
“ sorrowful, says he in his paraphrase upon  
“ the passage, because I go my ways, but

“ and if ye did rightly love me, forsooth ye  
 “ would rejoyse both for your own sake and  
 “ myne : for — I returne again to my  
 “ Father, to obtayne for you more excel-  
 “ lent gyftes at his hande, for because my  
 “ Father is greater than I am : and from  
 “ him it cummeth what thyng soever I do  
 “ depart with you.”

Acts xx. 28. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the holy Ghost (Spirit) hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

Dr. Doddridge thus enlarges upon the latter clause of this verse. “ See then that  
 “ — you be careful diligently to feed the  
 “ church of God which he hath redeemed  
 “ with his own precious blood, graciously  
 “ becoming incarnate for its salvation, and  
 “ submitting to the severest sufferings and  
 “ death in that *human nature*, which for  
 “ this purpose he united to *the divine*.”

To this paraphrase he subjoins the following note in the margin. “ How very  
 “ little reason there is to follow the *few co-*



“ *pies*, which read *Kypis Lord*, instead of  
 “ *Θεος God*, the Rev. Messrs. Enty and La-  
 “ vington have so fully shewn, in their dis-  
 “ pute with Mr. Joseph Hallet on this  
 “ text, that I think this passage must be al-  
 “ lowed as an incontestable proof, that *the*  
 “ *blood of Christ* is here called *the blood of*  
 “ *God*, as being *the blood of that man*, who  
 “ is also *God with us*, *God manifested in the*  
 “ *flesh*: and I cannot but apprehend that it  
 “ was by the special direction of the holy  
 “ spirit, that so remarkable an expression  
 “ was used.”

In what manner the subject was handled  
 by the persons here commended by Dr. Dod-  
 dridge, I know not; but I think every at-  
 tentive inquirer will have the most solid  
 grounds to conclude upon, that no such ex-  
 pression as the *blood of God* was ever utter-  
 ed by the apostle, or written by his histo-  
 rian, St. Luke, in this place. For in all the  
 ancient MSS. of best account, the reading  
 is, *the church of the Lord*, and not *the*  
*church of God*. In the most ancient transla-  
 tion of the N. T. nearest the times of the  
 apostles, i. e. the Syriac, it is *the church of*  
*Christ*. There is also a great variation in the  
 readings

readings of other ancient MSS. as *the church of God and the Lord; the church of the Lord and God*. But *the church of God*, as we have it in our translation, is hardly found in any ancient Manuscript. So little foundation is there for this triumph of the Doctor upon the occasion. That there should be so much variation in the ancient MSS. will not be thought strange, if a circumstance often remarked by persons versed in these matters be attended to, viz. that in the ancient copies of the Greek Testament, written by the hand before the use of printing, the words *God, Lord, Christ*, were thus abbreviated, OT, KT, XT; and how easily one, might, by mistake, be put for the other, will appear by the least cast of the eye. So that—but that one knows that it is a part of our frail humanity, to believe upon the slightest grounds what we wish and are inclined to; to be most confident often where we are least assured, and endeavour, by vehemency of asseveration, to make up for defect of evidence—one might wonder to hear this worthy person assert, not only upon a point so very disputable, but where there is the greatest probability that he was in the  
 wrong,

wrong, that he apprehended that it was by the special direction of the Holy Spirit that so remarkable an expression as that of the blood of God was used.

In another work, (m) it was shewn, from a note of Wetstein upon the place, that the very offensive expression, *the blood of God*, was reprobated by the famous Athanasius in his day, as one of the extravagancies of the *Arians*. So that it is plain he knew nothing of this language, in which Dr. Doddridge glories so much. The same Writer remarks, that some of the first Reformers, however orthodox, were staggered at such a shocking phrase. Bullinger would not say, *God died* for his church, but the Lord Jesus Christ died, and cleansed it with his own blood. And Aretius, that the church of God was purchased by the *blood of Christ*. They were not then so ready and expert in the doctrine of the two natures, by which more modern Divines can do such wonders, and make Christ and his apostles intend one thing, while they assert the very contrary.

L'En-

(m) A Sequel to the Apology for resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, p. 202, 203.



L' Enfant and Beusobre, in their French translation of the New Testament, in a note upon the place, suppose the apostle's words to have been, *the church of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own son*, which reading, they say, is favoured by several MS. copies. Erasmus seems to have adopted this reading, or to have thought it the only rational construction that could be put upon the passage, which he thus paraphrases :

“ Take diligent hede that Christ's shepe  
 “ lacke no holsome food, and not to play  
 “ the partes of wolves but of faythfull  
 “ shepherdes towards Goddes own congreg-  
 “ gation, which he must not neglygently  
 “ looke upon, forasmuch as God did sette so  
 “ much store by it, that he purchased it by  
 “ the bloud shedding of his onely be-  
 “ gotten sonne.”

I was much surprised to find the late Mr. Bowyer take it for granted, in his “ Con-  
 jectures on the New Testament,” that the  
*blood of God* was the true reading in this  
 place of Acts xx. 28. and this even without  
 giving any account of the state of the evi-  
 dence upon the question. For he makes no  
 remark at all upon the passage, but in a note  
 on

on John i. 1. refers to it as a proof of Christ being stiled God. The whole *note* is this.

“ John i. 1. *Και Θεος ην ο λογος.*] This being the only place where Christ is stiled God, F. *Και Θεος ην ο λογος*, as Rev. xix. 13. *ο λογος τς Θεος.* *Crellius.* Init. Evang. S. Joan. restitut.—But see Matth. i. 23. Acts xx. 28. Rom. ix. 5. Phil. ii. 6. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Tit. ii. 13. Heb. i. 8.”

This truly learned and very worthy person has here likewise indiscriminately sent his reader to *all the other* texts usually cited to prove Christ to be called God, as decisive on the point; and if he so esteemed them, which we are hardly allowed to doubt, it shews that his very general reading and attention to a thousand other matters, joined to the prejudices of education, never suffered him to examine properly into the meaning of the Scriptures on this important subject; but he took up implicitly with the vulgar authorized interpretations, which were also those of the learned, with whom he chiefly conversed. This, I apprehend, will appear by a careful inquiry into the true state and sense of these passages produced by him. For all of them will be found, either to re-  
late

late to God, and not at all to Christ, as Matth. i. 23. Rom. ix. 5. Tit. ii. 13; or to be false readings, i. e. plainly not the words of the sacred writers, or justly suspected, as this of Acts xx. 28. and 1 Tim. iii. 15; or wrong and ungrammatical constructions of the respective passages, as Philip. ii. 6. Hebr. i. 8. Bp. Pearce's greater attention and accuracy led him to hesitate here, and to intimate that there was no sufficient ground to read the *blood of God*, or to conclude Christ to be called God, as Mr. Bowyer would have it, from this passage of Acts xx. 28.

“ Wetstein, says the Bishop, (n) has  
 “ taken much pains in his N. Testament,  
 “ to shew, that the reading of *Κυριε Lord*,  
 “ should be preferred before that of *Θεε God*.  
 “ The MSS. vary in this point very much.  
 “ Some have *Θεε God*, others *Κυριε Lord*,  
 “ and others *Χρισε Christ*—agreeably to  
 “ which latter reading, in the form of con-  
 “ secrating Bishops used in our church, it is  
 “ said, that “ we should not be hasty in  
 “ laying on hands, and admitting any per-  
 “ son

(n) Commentary on the four Evangelists and Acts,  
 &c. in loc.



“ son to government in *the church of Christ,*  
 “ *which he hath purchased with no less price a*  
 “ *than the effusion of his own blood.*”

Having taken the liberty, for the truth's sake, to make these free remarks upon Dr. Doddridge, to shew that the common christian, and the unlearned, are under less favourable circumstances for coming at the true Scriptural knowledge of God and of Christ, from the commentaries and paraphrases of Scholars and Divines at this day, than they enjoyed from the great Erasmus's works at the dawn of the Reformation: I shall hope to be equally excused the freedom of pointing out the prevalency of the same narrow spirit in the members of the established church; of which I shall produce one or two further instances from the last named work of the late Mr. Bowyer, republished by Mr. Nichols, with additional conjectures of learned men among the laity and clergy.

Matth. xx. 23.—*but to sit on my right hand and on my left, is not mine to give; but*  
 it

it shall be given *to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.*

Dr. Owen here notes, that the words put in by our English translators, as they thought to compleat the sense, and here marked in a different character, might better be left out, and the whole passage be thus rendered agreeable to the original Greek; “ it is not mine to give unless to those for whom it is prepared of my Father.” After which this learned person adds. “ I mention this, because the common versions, by introducing *dabitur, it shall be given*, have injured the sense, diminished our Saviour’s power, and given undue advantage to the Arians and Socinians.” Conjectures on N. T. p. 507.

The excellent Bp. Pearce had made the same criticism before, but without such reflection, as it is not indeed easy to see what ground there is for it. If by *Arians* and *Socinians* be intended those who do not hold Christ to be the most high God, it will be difficult to shew how the alteration proposed supports the contrary opinion, which may be presumed to be that of Dr. Owen, viz. that *Christ is the most high God.* For in this

this amendment of the present version, which is very proper, there seems to be no change in the sense to give occasion to such great exultation on account of it. Our Lord still declares to the two sons of Zebedee, that he had no power to distribute the honours of his kingdom, but under the plan and direction of God, the sovereign disposer of all things. And herein he evidently confesses himself an inferior being, and his powers under the limitation of HIM, who is supreme over him, and over all. Dr. Owen also would have done well to have recollected those innumerable passages of the gospel-history, wherein Christ acknowledges his life, his doctrine, and all his powers and abilities of every kind, to have been given him by Almighty God. Which assuredly demonstrate him to be a creature of God, though most highly favoured above others; unless you recur to the imaginary doctrine of his being possessed of two natures, by which, as formerly observed, all these difficulties are supposed to be solved, while it really solves none, and only imposes upon the unthinking and unlearned, by words without meaning,



meaning, and without any countenance from the Scriptures.

Let us hear how Erasmus better taught the gospel in his day. “ Jesus was content  
 “ that they sayde, that they were readye to  
 “ follow his crosse; but as touching the re-  
 “ warde, because they understode not what  
 “ they asked, and because it was not for  
 “ that tyme to commune of it, he sayeth,  
 “ that it is not in him to geve them, but  
 “ that such dignities should not chaunce  
 “ but unto them unto whom it was geven  
 “ of the Father, for to deserve (by deserv-  
 “ ing) the chief place through notable and  
 “ excellent virtue.”

Acts vii. 59. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

Upon Dr. Bentley's asserting, that the word *God*, which is not in the original, was left out by a slight oversight and mistake of the Transcribers, the late Mr. Markland remarks; “ It is so far from being necessary to understand Θεον *God*, after επικαλεμενον *calling upon*, that it is quite contrary to

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Stephen's

Stephen's intention, which was to die a martyr to *the divinity of Jesus Christ*. So that it is him only he invokes, as if it had been written, ἐπικαλεσμενον [τον Κυριον Ιησεν], και λεγοντα, Κυριε Ιησε, δεξαι, &c. *calling upon the Lord Jesus, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*" Conjectures, &c. p. 221.

There is no ground to conclude from any thing related concerning Stephen, or spoken by him, that he knew any thing of what is here called *the Divinity of Christ*, or that he considered him as any other than a creature of God, highly exalted by him. Nor does it appear that he was put to death for any thing but maintaining, that Jesus, of whom the jewish people and their *rulers* had been (ver. 52.) *the betrayers and the murderers*, was nevertheless a most righteous person, and the Messiah, the great prophet whom God had promised to send to them. Nay so far was this holy martyr from asserting in his speech, which brought on his violent death, that Jesus was the most high God, that he distinguishes him as much as it was possible from that *adorable majesty*, by introducing the prophecy concerning him, and description of his person, which Moses their divine law-giver had

had given them many ages before he was born; ver. 37. that he was to be (o) *a man, of one of their tribes*, whom God would raise up in some future time; whom they were to obey.

Let us now contrast this comment and interpretation with Erasmus's paraphrase upon the place, who follows the same construction as Mr. Markland. " Soone upon this, says he, they began to stone Stephen, who neyther contended agayne, neyther spake woordes to them of any reproche, but made to Him, *whome he had seene*, his invocation, and sayde, Lord Jesu, take to thee my foule!" Erasmus sees here nothing to prove *the divinity of Christ*, but is very naturally led to conclude, as there is no other instance (p) but this in the Scriptures of any direct invocation of Christ, that therefore it was only the impression of the heavenly vision, with which Stephen had been favoured just before, being still strong upon his mind, that put him

(o) *This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, (Deut. xviii. 15.) a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me: him shall ye hear.* Acts vii. 37.

(p) Rev. xxii. 20. *Come, Lord Jesus!* This is an address made in a vision, where Christ was present.



him upon invoking the Lord Jesus, *whome he had seene.*"

The same apology which has been made for Mr. Bowyer's hasty interpretations of Scripture in what related to points of *established orthodoxy*, as they are sometimes called, must be applied to his friend Mr. Markland. This very learned man never appears to have had any doubt about those mysterious doctrines, which he had been taught to revere in his childhood without understanding them. And the bent of his studies afterwards, from which arose his great and accurate classical knowledge, led him quite another way. This is spoken with all due respect for his excellent talents in criticism, and particularly for their usefulness in illustrating the sacred text. But the province of interpreting the Scriptures is another thing, and requires a very different kind of application. I suppose this will be seen in the following note of his, p. 528. of the same work, which furnishes a fresh sample of the mist which the learned in these days are continually throwing over the true character of Christ in the Scriptures, and which prevents many from

from ever coming at the right knowledge of it.

“ John vi. Philip answered Jesus ; two  
 “ hundred pennyworth of bread is not suffi-  
 “ cient for them, that every one of them  
 “ may take a little.] He seems to say, we  
 “ have but 200 *denarii* in stock ; and if we  
 “ lay it all out in bread, it will not be suf-  
 “ ficient that each person may have a little.  
 “ See Mark vi. 37. “ *The Creator of the*  
 “ *world and his companions, at that time,*  
 “ *probably were not worth seven pounds ster-*  
 “ *ling all together.*” Markland.

Pious and good as certainly were this amiable person's intentions, had he sat down purposely to devise how to misrepresent and disgrace the gospel, he could not have taken a more effectual method than by adopting such sentiments and expressions ; of which there is no precedent in the Scriptures, and nothing assuredly in the passage before him to suggest it. One wonders his own mind was not shocked with the utter incongruity, and the degrading familiarity of speaking of the *Creator of the world* having twelve Jews, or twelve men of any country, for his companions, and travelling about in poor cir-

cumstances. He might equally have said, *the Creator of the world was a babe* (Luke i. 12. 16.) *wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger; was* (ii. 8.) *circumcised; was subject* (ver. 51.) *to his parents; increased* (ver. 52.) *in wisdom with his years; was faint and wearied* (John iv. 6, 7, 8.) *with having taken a long journey, and hungry, and thirsty, &c. &c. &c.* Surely the time will come, when these and the like circumstances, in which the blessed Jesus actually was, like one of us; and his constant and uniform declarations concerning himself, and those of his apostles concerning him, will bring back the christian world from acknowledging and worshipping him as the world's Creator, who was in all respects a human creature, though indued with powers from God above any other of the sons of men!

Where authors speak from a system, which has no foundation in the Scriptures, they will be sometimes off their guard and inconsistent. Mr. Markland would have found it difficult to reconcile the following *just* remark with the above, without supposing *two Gods, and two creators of the world.*

“Matth.



“ Matth. xi. 25. *O Father, Lord of the*  
 “ *heaven and earth!*] When our Saviour  
 “ has occasion to name his *Father*, that the  
 “ Jews might not possibly mistake whom  
 “ he meant by his *Father*, he often adds  
 “ some description which belongs to God  
 “ *only*; as in this place, *Lord of the heaven,*  
 “ &c. which the Jews knew could not be  
 “ applied to any other than *the one true God,*  
 “ *the Creator and Proprietor of the world.*”  
*Markland's Conjectures, &c. p. 503.* Here  
 is the God and Father of all, owned to be  
*the one true God, and Creator of the world.*  
 Would Mr. M. then have us to understand  
 that Jesus was another *true God, and Creator*  
*of the world.*

I cannot dismiss the subject without ob-  
 serving, that Mr. Bowyer, upon Romans  
 ix. 5. should not have quoted Dr. Whitby's  
 words, from his “ Paraphrase, with Anno-  
 tations, on the N. T.” without remarking  
 the painful inquiry and evidence upon which  
 the Doctor changed his sentiments of this  
 passage afterwards, as seen in his *Disquisiti-*  
*ones modestæ, &c.* and his Reply to Dr. Wa-  
 terland's objections to that work, Part 1st  
 and 2d. Nor should an accurate critic have

left unnoticed, that this most learned, most truly honest, and venerable writer, in his treatise entitled, *The Last Thoughts of Dr. Whitby; containing his correction of several passages in his Commentary on the New Testament*, among other particulars, in which he corrects his former interpretation of this passage, declares his approbation of that *reading*, which is mentioned in the beginning of this note by Mr. Bowyer, viz. that most probably the apostle wrote, *whose are the fathers, of whom Christ came; of whom (or whose) is the God over all, blessed for ever*. Nor should it have been omitted, that this *reading* which might have been altered by the slightest mistake of a Transcriber, in putting *o ων* instead of *ων ο*, is defended by Dr. Whitby, p. 80. by this argument; “ that the apostle refers  
 “ to God the Father’s being the God of the  
 “ Jews, and peculiarly known to them, and  
 “ related to them, as their God in cove-  
 “ nant. And this exposition, adds he in  
 “ the same place, is the more probable,  
 “ because this phrase is by the same apostle,  
 “ in this epistle and in another, plainly re-  
 “ ferred to God, the Father; as when he  
 “ says, Rom. i. 25. *the heathens worshiped*  
 “ *the*

“ *the creature more than the Creator, ος εστιν*  
 “ *ευλογητος εις τας αιωνας, who is blessed for*  
 “ *ever. And 2 Cor. xi. 31. The God and*  
 “ *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ος εστιν*  
 “ *ευλογητος εις τας αιωνας, who is blessed for*  
 “ *evermore, knoweth that I lie not.*”

*A brief consideration of Dr. Doddridge's proofs from Scripture, for the two supposed natures in Christ; referred to above.*

Many will look upon it as a needless waste of time, to take any notice of a doctrine so groundless and chimerical as this, which asserts that Christ was a Being compounded of two natures, a divine and a human nature, with separate understandings and faculties belonging to each of them, so that what might justly be said of him with respect to the one, was not true of him with respect to the other. As it is however a solution for this mystery of men's own making, viz. that *Christ was the most high God and a mortal man at the same time*, to which the greater part, learned and unlearned, fly to defend it, when every other device and expedient fails, as what is capable of reconciling direct

con-



contradictions, and of justifying our Lord in that double meaning which they would fix upon him, of saying that he did not know a thing, (Mark xiii. 32.) when he really did know it; I shall not think much of examining, what kind of support for the reality of these two natures in Christ, is brought by Dr. Doddridge, in his note on the above text, Mark xiii. 32.

1. He first alleges the saying of the sacred historian, (Luke ii. 52.) that *Jesus increased in wisdom*. Now unless you will suppose, and take for granted, the very point in question, we have the fullest evidence here, that our Lord had but one nature, the human; or at least that St. Luke knew not of any other. For this historian, having first mentioned Jesus being born of Mary, and described him an helpless babe in arms; he proceeds to give a singular proof of his pious turn and knowlege of the Scriptures at twelve years old: After which, he says no more of him, from that time to the age of manhood, but this; *Jesus increased in wisdom and stature*; or, as it may more justly be rendered, *Jesus increased in wisdom with his years, and in favour with God and man*.

Can

Can any one with truth conclude from this account, that the evangelist intended to teach that Jesus was any other than a human creature; and that, like the rest of mankind, he gradually improved in knowledge and goodness? If I come, like Dr. Doddridge, to the reading of this and the like portions of Scripture, prepossessed and fortified beforehand with a full belief of Jesus having a divine nature, of his being God; and persuaded also that St. Luke, in the passage under consideration, speaks only of *the endowments of his human nature* (to use the Doctor's words) *being communicated to him in a gradual manner*; there is an end of all arguing and endeavours to come at the truth. I must be left to enjoy my own persuasion. However, we learn nothing of the kind from St. Luke, that Christ had also a divine nature, and was the most high God; but, quite the contrary.

2. The Doctor next produces that saying of our Lord to the learned Jew, Nicodemus; John iii. 13. *No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven.* And he supposes Christ to intend thereby, that  
 “ even

“ even while he was on earth, he was in  
 “ heaven at the same time, as he was every  
 “ where present with respect to his *Divine*  
 “ *Nature.*”

In another place (*q*), to which I would refer, it has been thought by some to be made out to full satisfaction, that the words in question hold forth nothing of the kind which is here inferred from them ; but are thus to be understood :

*And no man hath ascended up to heaven]* viz. no man knows the whole mind and will of God for the salvation of mankind :

*But he that came down from heaven]* viz. but I, who have my commission from God, who am his prophet, his messenger, the Messiah :

*Who is in heaven]* viz. who am intimately acquainted with the counsels of God. (*R*)

I did

(*q*) A Sequel to the Apology for resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, p. 213 to 219.

(*R*) This interpretation is confirmed by John i. 18 ; the whole of which is expressive of the same sentiment as this of John iii. 13 ; and ο ον εις τον κολπον του πατρος, *who is in the bosom of the Father*, has exactly the same meaning as ο ον εν τω ορατω, *who is in heaven* ; and signifies the being admitted to the knowledge of secret and gracious designs of the heavenly Father,



I did not know at the time, that Raphe-  
lius, in his preface to the first volume of his  
“Annotationes in Sacram Scripturam, &c.”  
had so ably defended this interpretation, or  
I should have cited him for it, as I have  
done other judicious critics. He produces  
a very learned Frenchman, Vatable, hebrew  
professor in the College royal at Paris, who  
lived at the beginning of the Reformation,  
(for he died in 1547) giving this short but  
comprehensive paraphrase of our Lord’s words  
in this place; *Nemo novit res celestes præter  
me, i. e.* No man is acquainted with the  
counsels of God so fully as I am.

Indolent and superficial inquirers among  
christians, and unbelievers of like character,  
may object to such a construction of our  
Lord’s words; that the real meaning should  
be so remote from the sound of the words.  
But where persons study the sacred writings  
as they would any others, and as they ought,  
to understand them thoroughly; examine the  
context, the persons speaking and spoken to,  
and compare together the different parts of a  
book so various and complicated, and reach-  
ing through such a vast extent of ages as the  
Bible; all whose parts in some measure cor-  
respond

respond with and are dependent on each other, and the same peculiar phraseology running through the whole, treating of divine things in language appropriated to them: such persons, who are alone the competent judges, will find this sense assigned to Christ's words natural and just.

3. Another proof of Christ's possessing two natures; that is, of his being the most high God as well as a mortal man, Dr. Doddridge derives from 1 Cor. ii. 8. where it is spoken of the Jews, that *they crucified the Lord of glory*. His argument, for this he does not draw out at large, is founded on a presumption, that *Lord of glory* is a specific title of the most high God. And not venturing to assert that *God could*, properly speaking, *be crucified*, he has recourse to the two natures, of which he reckons Christ to be composed, as explanatory of the whole matter: and infers, that in like manner as he had shewn on Mark xiii. 32. *that Christ might be said to be ignorant of the day of judgment, from his not knowing it as man, though as God he was well acquainted with it*: So St. Paul might say, *the Lord of glory was crucified, although as such he did not suffer death*;

*death; not in his divine, but only in his human nature.*

But all such refinement and equivocation the apostles of Jesus abhorred no less than their divine Master. There was no occasion however to call in the imaginary doctrine of the two natures to account for the *Lord of glory being crucified*, as the difficulty arises wholly from mistake. For as *the God of glory* (Acts vii. 2.) signifies the glorious God, and (Eph. i. 17.) the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Father of glory*, the glorious Father, by a most common form of construction: So the *Lord of glory* signifies *the glorious Lord*, the Lord whom God has glorified. And how the holy Jesus came to be possessed of this high title and preeminence, this *lordship*, whatever be implied in it, the Scriptures sufficiently inform us. Phil. ii. 8, 9, &c. *Because Christ Jesus became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: Therefore God hath highly exalted him, and graciously bestowed upon him a name which is above every name: that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that*



*that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And Acts ii. 36. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*

4. With respect to the last proof of Christ having *two natures*, constituting him man and God at the same time, which Dr. Doddridge would deduce from Acts xx. 28; it has been shewn above, p. 39. &c. that there is satisfactory reason to believe that *this*—I had almost said *profane* language, *the blood of God*, was never made use of by the apostle Paul, nor penned by his historian St. Luke; but that his words were, either, *the church of Christ*, or *of the Lord*, which he hath purchased with his own blood; or *the church of God* which he hath purchased with the blood of his own son.

## CHAPTER II.

*Of the promising State of the Unitarian Doctrine in England, at the time of the Reformation, with the violent means used to suppress it.*

STRYPE, in his Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer, after mentioning some persons who held fanatical opinions about grace, and the privileges of the Saints, viz. that the *Elect* have a right to take so much of the things of this world as may supply their necessities, &c. which had done so much mischief in Germany; observes farther, p. 179, in his account of the year 1548; that “there were other heresies now vented abroad, as the denial of the Trinity, and the deity of the Holy Ghost, and the assertion that Jesus Christ was a mere man and not God, *because he had the accidents of human nature, such as hungering and thirsting, and being visible; and that the benefit men receive by Jesus*

F

“ Christ

" Christ was the bringing them to the true  
 " knowledge of God."

" There was one John Allerton, con-  
 " vicer he, who preached these doctrines :  
 " who, on the 18th of December, was sum-  
 " moned to Lambeth, to appear there be-  
 " fore the Archbishop ; when John Whit-  
 " well, the ABp's Almoner, and Thomas  
 " Langley, both priests, and his Grace's  
 " chaplains, exhibited a schedule of diverse  
 " heresies and damned opinions against the  
 " said Allerton, which are recited in the  
 " Apology he made. The same where-  
 " of is as followeth :

" In the name of God, Amen. Before  
 " your most learned Father in God, Thomas  
 " ABp. Primate and Metropolitan of all  
 " England, Chancellor of our most dread  
 " Sovereigns Lord, and excellent prince, Ed-  
 " ward VI. by the grace of God, &c. I  
 " John Allerton, priest, of my pure heart,  
 " free will, voluntary and honest knowledge,  
 " confess and openly recognize, that in  
 " times past I thought, believed, said, heard  
 " and affirmed, these errors, heresies and  
 " damnable opinions following ; that is to  
 " say, 1. That the Trinity of persons was



" established (i. e. only) by the confession  
 " of Athanasius, declared by a psalm, *Qui-*  
 " *raque vult, &c.* And that the Holy  
 " Ghost is not God, but only a certain  
 " power of the Father. 2. That Jesus  
 " Christ, that was conceived of the Virgin  
 " Mary, was a holy prophet, and especially  
 " beloved of God the Father; but that he  
 " was not the true and living God: for-  
 " much as he was seen, and lived, (as other  
 " men do) hungered, and thirsted.

3. " That this only is the fruit of Jesus  
 " Christ's passion; that whereas we were  
 " strangers from God, and had no know-  
 " ledge of his Testament, it pleased God by  
 " Christ, to bring us to the acknowledging  
 " of his holy power by the Testament."

" Wherefore I the said John Athanasius,  
 " detesting and abhorring all my said er-  
 " rors, heresies, and damned opinions, will-  
 " ingly and with all my power affecting  
 " hereafter firmly to believe in the true and  
 " perfect faith of Christ, and his Holy  
 " Church, purposing to follow the true and  
 " sincere doctrine of Holy Church, with a  
 " pure and free heart, voluntarily mind,  
 " will and intend, namely to forsake, re-

“ linquish, renounce, and despise the said  
 “ detestable errors, heresies, and abomina-  
 “ ble opinions: granting and confessing  
 “ now, 1. That the blessed Trinity con-  
 “ sisteth in three distinct Persons, and one  
 “ Godhead; as God the Father, God the  
 “ Son, and God the Holy Ghost, coequal  
 “ in power and might. 2. That Jesus  
 “ Christ is both God and Man, after his  
 “ holy nature eternally begotten of his Fa-  
 “ ther, of his own substance; and in his  
 “ humanity was conceived by the Holy  
 “ Ghost incarnate; and for our redemption,  
 “ being very God, became Man. 3. That  
 “ by the death of Jesus Christ we be not  
 “ only made partakers of the Testament,  
 “ and so disposed to the knowlege of his  
 “ godly will and power, but also that we  
 “ have full redemption and remission of our  
 “ sins in his blood.”

“ Then he subscribed his hand to this  
 “ confession before the Archbishop, exhi-  
 “ biting it for his act; and lifting up his  
 “ hand, beseeched his Grace to deal merci-  
 “ fully and graciously with him; and  
 “ touching the gospel, gave his faith that  
 “ he would faithfully and humbly obey the  
 “ commands

“ commands of the Holy Mother Church,  
 “ and whatsoever penance the, said reverend  
 “ Father should lay upon him.”

Soon after this comes an account of two excellent persons burnt to death, for holding the like opinions with this man; for *Arianism*, as it was then called.

Thus, by promises of life, and fears of the most dreadful sufferings, were unhappy men dealt with and prevailed upon, to make abjuration of their heresies, i. e. to dissemble and speak contrary to their inward persuasion. For hardly any one, who, on such good grounds as this *Asketon*, believed Jesus Christ to be truly one of the human race; or who believed the holy Ghost or holy Spirit, to be only the power of the Father; could soon, or indeed at all be brought to believe these two to be each of them the most high God, and equal to the Father of all.

*Pliny, the younger*, is the first upon record, who set on foot this method of judicial proceeding against christians, in compelling them, on pain of instant death, to abjure their religious opinions, and avow the direct contrary at the very moment; in



which he went on to act, not only without any sense of God, but even of common humanity.

(r) “ I put the question to them, says he in his letter to *Trajan*; whether they were christians. Upon their confessing to me that they were; I repeated the question a second and a third time, threatening also to punish them with death. Such as still persisted, I ordered immediately to be led out to suffer. For it was no doubt with me, whatever might be the nature of their opinion, that contumacy and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished.”

What! was constancy in what they were persuaded was the truth, and agreeable to the will of God, to be called a contumacy and obstinacy, for which men were not to be suffered to live? “ There is here, (s) as one well observes, the most enormous  
“ and

(r) “ Interrogavi ipsos, an essent christiani. Confitentes, iterum ac tertio interrogavi, supplicium minatus; perseverantes duci jussi. Neque enim dubitabam, qualecunque esset quod faterentur, pervicaciam certe, et inflexibilem obstinationem, debere puniri.”

C. Plinius Trajano Imp. S. Lib. x. ep. xcvii,

(s) Bibliotheque ancienne et moderne. Tom. vi. p,

“ and complicated iniquity and injustice,  
 “ Would *Pliny* then have had them, if they  
 “ were christians, to deny it? Was it just  
 “ or equitable to punish capitally, men that  
 “ he himself owns had no crime whatsoever  
 “ laid to their charge, unless it was their sin-  
 “ cerity and courage in exposing themselves  
 “ to death, rather than utter a falsehood?  
 “ Where was the wisdom of drawing weak  
 “ and unprincipled men, when any such  
 “ were found among them, to tell a lie in  
 “ order to save their lives; that is, to say that  
 “ they had changed their sentiments when  
 “ they had nothing to move them to it, but  
 “ the menaces he had thrown out against  
 “ them? Threats and penalties convey no  
 “ light into the understanding; nor do I  
 “ suppose that *Pliny* believed they did.”

The real truth is, this admired writer, and  
 most accomplished character of antiquity,  
 with all his politeness and humanity, for  
 which he is justly celebrated in other re-  
 spects, was here a *mere barbarian*; sporting  
 with the lives of innocent men, out of nar-  
 row views of State-policy, and wholly in-  
 sensible of the obligations of truth upon  
 the human mind, and of the duty, reverence,

and homage, which it owes to God, its Maker. A deplorable evidence of this was seen in the alternative, which he proposed as judge to the innocent prisoners brought before him; either immediate death, or to worship the image of his Master, the emperor, and the statues of their other gods, as a test of their renouncing the christian faith. In this requisition, he must be concluded to have been *a dark and gross idolater*, if sincere; or otherwise, an *egregious flatterer of royalty*, and *little less than an Atheist*.

It was, however, a poor temporary triumph over the truth, that was thus obtained by heathen or by christian persecutors. And how little likely a change of sentiments so produced, and in such circumstances, was, to be genuine, the unhappy *Cranmer* himself soon gave melancholy proof, which is well known. Although he did all that mortal could do, afterwards, to redeem himself from the disgrace of such a foul act of dissimulation, and to repair the injury he had done to the truth he had *seemed* to disown; when, at the stake, he astonished and confounded his unfeeling and exulting persecutors,



tors, by first nobly (*t*) scorching in the fire the hand that had signed his fatal recantation, before he committed the rest of his body to the flames.

There were a few however in those days, who abhorred all constraint upon conscience; who better understood the nature of the gospel, and the rights of men; and endeavoured to teach others. One excellent person, a foreigner,

(*t*) The following curious account of his manner of dying is given by a worthy and humane person, and no ordinary character, a Roman Catholic, himself an eye-witness of it, and pitying the sufferer, all the while his wretched religious principles forced him to look upon him, as justly punished here, and lost for ever.

“ Coming to the Stake with a chearful countenance  
 “ and willing mind, he put off his garments with haste,  
 “ and stood upright in his shirt. And a Batcheler of  
 “ Divinity, named Elye, of Brazen nose college, labour-  
 “ ed to convert him to his former Recantation, with the  
 “ two Spanish Friars. But when the Friars saw his con-  
 “ stancy, they said in latin one to another, Let us go  
 “ from him; We ought not to be nigh him: For the  
 “ Devil is with him. But the Batcheler in Divinity was  
 “ more earnest with him. Unto whom he answered;  
 “ that as concerning his Recantation, he repented it right  
 “ fore, because he knew it was against the truth; with  
 “ other words more. Whereupon the Lord *Williams*  
 “ cried, make short, make short. Then the Bishop took  
 “ certain

foreigner, it will be proper for me to mention, as his book was first published here, not long after the times we are treating of; and still more, because he was an *Unitarian* on the truest grounds, and of the best principles; a confessor also to the truth, and not without some sufferings for it in our own country, whither he had fled for shelter.

(u) “ That one thing (says he, referring to the very practice we are arraigning) “ I  
“ never

“ certain of his friends by the hand. But the Batcheler  
“ of Divinity refused to take him by the hand, and blamed  
“ all others that so did, and said, he was sorry that ever  
“ he came into his company. And yet again he required  
“ him to agree to his former Recantation. And the  
“ Bishop answered, shewing his hand; *This is the hand*  
“ *that wrote it, and therefore shall it first suffer punishment.*”

“ Fire being now put to him, he stretched out his right  
“ hand, and thrust it into the flame, and held it there a  
“ good space, before the fire came to any other part of his  
“ body; where his hand was seen of every man, sensibly  
“ burning; crying with a loud voice, *This hand hath*  
“ *offended.* As soon as the fire got up, he was very soon  
“ dead; never stirring or crying all the while.”

Strype's Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer, p. 384  
and 389.

(u) “ Illud profecto, quin omni prorsus careat ratione,  
“ assequi nunquam potui: quod qui falsum quid impi-  
“ umque docuisse videatur, ut palinodiam canat, adigen-  
“ dum

“ never could look upon but as the most  
 “ unreasonable of all; that a man who is  
 “ supposed

“ dum putent, proposita (si faciat) impunitate. Quor-  
 “ sum id quæso? Quæ utilitas fuerit, si declinandi sup-  
 “ plicii causa, reluctante conscientia, suam hæreticus re-  
 “ tractaverit sententiam? Illud unum prætexi potest, quod  
 “ qui eodem tenentur errore, ac forte latent, ejus exemplo  
 “ idem facturi cum animis suis videantur, erroremque  
 “ abjecturi; quin etiam alius alii ut idem faciant, au-  
 “ thores futuri. Levissime vero impressam eam persua-  
 “ sionem esse oporteat, quæ tam facile evelli possit. Quid?  
 “ nullane subeat suspicio, vitandi supplicii causa, non ex  
 “ animo factam retractationem? Non hinc potius ad in-  
 “ vidiam accesserit plurimum, si videatur magistratus non  
 “ corpus tantum occidere, sed etiam in animi machinari  
 “ perniciem? Itane autem inermes ad debellandos errores  
 “ sumus, ut ponendum nobis sit in mendacio, in fictis  
 “ præ metu retractationibus præsidium? Sed dicat ali-  
 “ quis: ‘ minime vero hoc agimus, ut qualemcumque  
 “ extorqueamus palinodiam; sed ut hæreticus errorem,  
 “ non tam ore, quin etiam corde agnoscat.’ Præclare  
 “ id quidem, si modo impetrare possis. Verum quid sibi  
 “ volunt hic sive minæ, sive blandimenta? Num hæc  
 “ quidem ad voluntatem expugnandam valere aliquid  
 “ possint? Sed cum intellectu res est: ille neque minis,  
 “ neque blandimentis mutatur. Efficere hæc non possunt,  
 “ ut quod verum ante videbatur, postea videatur falsum,  
 “ ne si mutare quidem sententiam vehementer cupiat.  
 “ ————— Quod si non potest hæreticus, ne si velit  
 “ quidem, errorem, nisi cogat ratio, abjicere; quid estis  
 “ misero ut mentiatur, Deumque in eo magis ac magis  
 “ offendat, molesti.” *Acontii Stratagemata*, p. 176—178.



“ supposed to have taught any thing false  
 “ or impious, should be compelled upon a  
 “ promise of impunity, to make recantation  
 “ of it. To what end this, I pray? What  
 “ advantage can be proposed by it, if the  
 “ heretic, for the sake of avoiding the pu-  
 “ nishment, retract his opinion against his  
 “ conscience? It may perhaps be pretend-  
 “ ed, that those who are in the like error  
 “ and lye concealed, may thus be wrought  
 “ upon sincerely to renounce it, and all be  
 “ brought by degrees to follow the example.  
 “ But they must have taken up their senti-  
 “ ments on very slight grounds, who can so  
 “ easily relinquish them. Is there not much  
 “ more reason to suspect, that such renun-  
 “ ciation of their sentiments may be made  
 “ merely to avoid suffering? And will not  
 “ this have the appearance of something  
 “ very shocking and oppressive, as if the  
 “ magistrate aimed not only to kill the body,  
 “ but to lay a snare for the destruction of  
 “ the soul too? Are we then so destitute of  
 “ armour wherewith to encounter heretical  
 “ opinions, that we must have recourse to  
 “ lies and feigned abjuration for our defence  
 “ against them? It may be said, that this is  
 “ by

“ by no means what is intended, to procure  
 “ a retractation any how of such opinions,  
 “ but that the heretic may not only in  
 “ words, but from the heart abandon them.  
 “ This is indeed finely spoken, if it can be  
 “ accomplished. But what mean those fierce  
 “ threatenings on the one hand, and flatter-  
 “ ing promises on the other? These may  
 “ indeed contribute to overcome and influ-  
 “ ence the will and inclinations: but the  
 “ great business is with the understanding.  
 “ This cannot be affected by menaces or the  
 “ most engaging allurements. They cannot  
 “ make that which before appeared to be  
 “ true, to appear false, how much soever a  
 “ man may desire it.———But if this  
 “ cannot be done; and an heretic however  
 “ earnestly he wish it, cannot quit his here-  
 “ sy but by conviction of stronger argument  
 “ against it, why should you solicit and  
 “ importune the miserable man to lie, and  
 “ thereby more offend both God and man?”

This is taken from *Acontius's Stratagems of Satan*; a valuable work, little known, composed in a fluent latin stile, the language of the learned universally at the time. I cannot readily give a higher character of it, than by mentioning,

tioning, that in our struggles for religious liberty, first against Charles I. and Archbishop Laud and his brethren; next against the Assembly of (Presbyterian) Divines, supported by the Long Parliament: to allay those violent heats and intolerant animosities that were then kindled on all sides, some unknown friend to truth and to mankind started up, and translated into english, and published, the third book of this treatise. And not many years before, perhaps by the same hand, undoubtedly with the same christian benevolent view, the original in latin had been handsomely printed at Oxford, to the honour of that University, with an emblematic Frontispiece engraved before it, and this title in english: (I give the latin in the margin) (w).

*The Stratagems of Satan. In Eight Books.  
First published almost seventy years ago, and  
then dedicated to the most illustrious Queen  
ELIZABETH,*

(w) STRATAGEMATA SATANÆ. Libri Octo. Quos JACOBUS ACONTIUS Vir summi judicii nec minoris pietatis, annis abhinc penè 70 primum edidit et serenissimæ Reginæ ELIZABETHÆ inscripsit. Editio iterata et emendata. *Servate unitatem spiritus in vinculo pacis.* OXONII. 1631.



ELIZABETH, By JAMES ACONTIUS, *a man of consummate judgment and eminent piety.* A new and correct Edition. *Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* OXFORD, 1631.

*Acontius* himself, or *Giacomo Contio*, as Bayle writes his name, was an Italian, a native of Trent; a place famous for the celebrated council held there. He informs us in a letter to a friend, printed at the end of his *Stratagems*, that he had been bred up to the study of the (*b*) law, and had afterwards spent a great part of his life in a court: notwithstanding its luxurious ease and blandishments; but engaged in the duties of a laborious department. In the Dedication of his book to Q. Elizabeth, and in a dedicatory epistle

(*b*) It is in speaking of the difficulty he met with in translating into latin a treatise on Fortifications, which he had formerly penned in Italian, where he says with elegant simplicity; *Mitto difficultatem nova inventa latinis verbis exprimendi, homini præsertim qui bona vitæ parte inter Bartoli, Baldi, et ejus farinæ hominum sordes consumpta, multisque annis aulicæ vitæ, sed minime tamen otiosæ datis, sero admodum ad politiores musas accesserit.*

epistle to another work, (c) cited by Bayle, he speaks of his being an exile from his native country, for the sake of the gospel. He left it in 1557. The above named letter mentions his having been some time settled in England, in December 1562, when it was dated; and enjoying by the Queen's liberality some employment about fortifications; having formerly turned his studies that way, and being admirably fitted for it by his skill in mathematics.

His

(c) In this last, he thus addresses his friend, *Francis Betti*, a Roman. “ The laborious and anxious employment, in which we have long been engaged together, the  
“ similarity of our studies and inclinations, and what is  
“ above all, our union of sentiment in religion, and the  
“ resolution we have taken of abandoning our native  
“ country for the sake of it, have knit us together in the  
“ dearest and most indissoluble bonds of friendship.—Com-  
“ munes fere quos diu sustinuimus labores ac sollicitu-  
“ dines, eadem propemodum studia, idem velle ac nolle,  
“ et quod omnia superat, eadem de religione sententia,  
“ idemque sumptum relinquendæ ob eam rem patriæ  
“ consilium, ita arcto nos vinculo conjunxerunt, ut con-  
“ junctius jam nihil esse potest.” How fruitful was Italy at that period, not only in men learned and ingenious, but of eminent piety and virtue, who gave up every thing to enjoy the purity of Christ's religion!

His *Stratagems* bespeak him to have been a firm believer in the Divine Unity. In one place indeed, p. 110. he styles Christ God : but it is well known with what latitude that term has been used by many christians, and particularly that those who at that time held Christ to be only a man endued with extraordinary divine powers, made no scruple of calling him God on account of his divine powers and authority. Although it would have been better to have abstained from it, as it is not the language of Scripture ; and is calculated to mislead the ignorant and unwary.

In London, our Italian became a member of the Dutch church in Austin Friars ; where he came under some trouble for his opinions from the Bishop of London, who had the superintendence of the churches of foreigners. Strype, having mentioned their chief Elder, and Ministers, one of whom was *Hadrian Hamsted*, tells us, (d) “ There were  
 “ at this time other learned foreigners be-  
 “ longing to this church ; one whereof was  
 “ *Jacobus Acontius*, who, with *Hamsted*, was  
 “ touched

(d) Strype's Life of Grindall, p. 42.



“ touched with *Anabaptistical* and *Arian*  
 “ principles ; and had divers followers,  
 “ shrowding themselves under the wings  
 “ of this church.”

Their chief Anabaptistical principle, soon  
 after explained by our historian, was, “ that  
 “ Christ took not flesh of the Virgin Mary,  
 “ but brought it down from heaven.” This  
 was held by the Dutch Anabaptists. And,  
 as he proceeds to relate, (e) “ being otherwise  
 “ outwardly sober and quiet men, and pre-  
 “ tending (*professing* rather) zealously to be-  
 “ lieve and worship Christ, and to expect  
 “ salvation by him ; the abovesaid Hadrian  
 “ took their parts, and laboured much for  
 “ their peaceable and quiet subsistence, and  
 “ enjoyment of their opinions till they were  
 “ further enlightened. And he declared  
 “ how this gentle behaviour towards them  
 “ was the likeliest way to win them from  
 “ their error. Hadrian himself was a sober  
 “ and pious man, and gave himself out to  
 “ be no *Anabaptist* in his own judgment ;  
 “ but firmly held that Christ’s taking flesh  
 “ of the Virgin, was a thing necessary to  
 “ salvation. But he was for tolerating these  
 “ men.

(e) Id. Ibid. p. 43.

“ men that held the contrary; and wrote  
 “ a paper consisting of various arguments  
 “ for the same. Wherein he ran out into  
 “ many dangerous expressions, and vented  
 “ divers unsound tenets.”

It is nothing surprizing, that a plea for an universal toleration of christians, however erroneous their opinions, who give no just offence to the state, should be reckoned dangerous, and give umbrage at that time. One may perceive in the third book of *Acontius's Stratagems*, a perfect resemblance of this laudable moderation of Hadrian; and this, with his avowal perhaps of his unitarian sentiments somewhat too freely, may have given occasion to what Strype farther relates (*f*). “ The Bishop, (*Grindall*) as he had censured the  
 “ afore said *Hadrian*, he did the like to another learned man of the same church,  
 “ named *Jacobus Acontius*, a favourer and  
 “ adherer to this man and his opinions;  
 “ being withheld by the Bishop's sentence  
 “ from receiving the holy sacrament, forbidding both the Dutch or any other  
 “ church to admit him.”

*Grindall*

(*f*) Id. Ibid. p. 45.

*Grindall* was a truly pious and learned man, and a moderate good natured Divine : but the temper of the times and his own prejudices would not permit him to give any countenance but the contrary, where the Athanasian doctrine of Christ being the most high God was called in question ; as it was by Acontius, and by the greater part of the Dutch Anabaptists at that time.

A little time after the forced Abjuration of Atheton above related, in 1550, *Strype* represents the Unitarian doctrine as spreading so fast, that the leading churchmen were alarmed at it, and under apprehensions of its becoming the prevailing opinion. His words are very remarkable.

“ *Arianism* now shewed itself so openly,  
 “ and was in such danger of spreading farther, that it was thought necessary to suppress it by using more rugged methods  
 “ than seemed agreeable to the merciful principles of the profession of the gospel.”

He then proceeds to give an instance of their putting these their cruel unchristian resolutions



resolutions in practice, upon Joan Bocher, or Joan of Kent, who, from her connections, which will by and by be seen, and from the extraordinary efforts used to bring her to retract her opinions, would seem to have been a person of family and note. She appears to have agreed in sentiment with the Dutch Anabaptists above-mentioned, in their general persuasion of Christ being, not God, but a creature; and in their particular notion, concerning his not taking flesh of the virgin Mary, and not having a mortal infirm body as we have; thinking it an injurious degradation (C) of him.

The Bishops *Latymer*, *Cranmer*, and *Burnet* after them; mention that peculiarity of the Anabaptists, concerning Christ's body, as her only heresy. The former of these, who was one of the Commissioners, (not much to his honour) who sat in judgment upon her, says, " Her opinion was this: " that the Son of God penetrated through " the virgin Mary as through a glass, taking no substance of her. This foolish " woman denied the common creed, *natus* " *ex*

(C) Neal's History of the Puritans, p. 60, 61.

“ *ex Maria virgine, born of the virgin*  
 “ *Mary*, and said that our Saviour had a  
 “ fantastical body (D).”

But Strype, in the *contents* prefixed to the chapter we have just now cited, wherein he speaks of her, puts for one of its articles—*Joan of Kent promotes Arianism*. And immediately after the above quotation, he goes on to relate that it was for this that she suffered, in the following words :

“ One Joan Bocher, or Knel, commonly  
 “ called Joan of Kent, being condemned  
 “ for *this heresy*, the latter end of the last  
 “ year, a warrant, dated April 27, was issued  
 “ by order of Council to the Lord Chan-  
 “ cellor, to make out a Writ to the Sheriff  
 “ of London for her execution, to be  
 “ burned for certain detestable opinions of  
 “ heresy.”

How it was that this worthy person promoted, I will not say, *Arianism*, but the right knowlege of God's truth, has been related from good authority in another place; (d)  
 but

(D) Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer, by Strype, p. 180.

(d) Apology on resigning the Vic. of Catterick, p. 43. Ed. iv. and Strype's Eccl. Memorials, vol. ii, p. 214.

but deserves to be mentioned again; viz,  
 “ She was a great disperfer, of Tindall’s  
 “ New Testament, translated by him into  
 “ English, and printed at Colen, and was a  
 “ great reader of Scripture herself. Which  
 “ book also she disperfed in the Court, and  
 “ fo became known to certain women of  
 “ quality, and was more particularly ac-  
 “ quainted with Mrs. Anne Afcue. She  
 “ ufed, for the more fecrefy, to tie the  
 “ books with strings under her apparel, and  
 “ fo pafs with them into the Court.”

(e) Was a woman of this excellent character, who thus hazarded her life in dangerous times, to bring others to the knowledge of God’s word, under a popifh prince; to be burnt alive for her opinions, were they

(e) “ Joan Bocher, an obftinate heretick, maintaining  
 “ that Chrift affumed nothing of the virgin Mary, but  
 “ paffed through her as a conduit-pipe. She, with one  
 “ or two Arians, were all who, *and that juftly*, died in  
 “ this King’s reign, for their opinions.” *Fuller’s Church*  
*History*, p. 398. This obfervation, to his lafting dif-  
 grace, is made by our Hiftorian, upon the fhort comment  
 on Joan Bocher’s death in Edward VI.’s Diary; by which  
 it appears that that promifing young prince had been told  
 every thing in her diffavour, to make him eafy with the



they ever so wrong, taken up out of respect for Christ; and this by protestant Bishops? and her condemnation to so cruel a death to be in a very short space of time after, applauded by protestants themselves under the cross, as we shall soon see? But where religious zeal, and the supposed guilt of heresy were concerned, neither age nor sex were to be spared, nor any mercy to be shewn.

IN the following reign of Mary, when the Papists had the power of the sword again in their hands; and it came to be the case of Protestants, who had made those to suffer whom they deemed heretics, to suffer in their turn; in the examination of Arch-deacon Philpot, a very eminent protestant Divine and martyr, before Lord Rich and other commissioners, we have the following dialogue

sentence of her death, which he had signed reluctantly and by over-persuasion. And I produce *Fuller's* remark, to shew how much all authors, and even men otherwise of good temper, are continually inflaming the minds of their readers, against those who can see no grounds to believe Christ to be the most high God, but look upon him as an inferiour Being, from the account the Scriptures give of him.

dialogue concerning what passed, of Philpot's own writing, preserved, by Fox: in which the violent death of this worthy woman is again introduced.

“ *The 6 Examination of maister PHILPOT, martyr.*

“ *Lord Rich.*) All heretickes doe boast  
 “ of the spirit of God, and everie one  
 “ would have a church by himselfe, as  
 “ Joan of Kent, and the Anabaptists. I  
 “ had myselfe Joan of Kent a sevensnight in  
 “ my house, after the writ was out for her  
 “ to be burnt, where my lord of Canter-  
 “ burie, and bishop Ridley resorted almost  
 “ daily unto her: but she was so high in  
 “ the spirite, they could do nothing with  
 “ her, with all their learning. But she  
 “ went willfully into the fire, and was  
 “ burnt; and so do you.”

“ *Philpot.*) As for Joan of Kent, she  
 “ was a vaine (*f*) woman, I knew her well;  
 “ and *an hereticke indeed well worthy to be*  
 “ *burnt*, because she stood against one of  
 “ the manifest articles of our faith, con-  
 “ trarie

(*f*) A *vaine* woman) that is, conceited. As appears from his use of the term a few lines below.

“ trarie to the Scriptures. And such vaine  
 “ spirites be soon known from the true  
 “ spirite of God and his church : for that  
 “ the same abideth within the limites of  
 “ God’s word, and will not go out of the  
 “ same, neither stubburnely maintain any  
 “ thing contrarie to the word, as I have  
 “ God’s word throughly on my side to shew  
 “ for what I stande in.”

Behold here the woful effects of the best  
 and most merciful institution of religion,  
 ill understood and perverted ; when ignorant,  
 presumptuous men make very disputable  
 points of doctrine, if not very false ones, of  
 such mighty importance, that those who re-  
 ject them are not to be allowed fit to live,  
 but are to be hunted out of the world, and  
 destroyed like wild beasts. The mind is  
 filled with horror and sadness, upon seeing a  
 person in the situation of this clergyman,  
 under trial for his life before a popish tribu-  
 nal, not only without any scruple, but with  
 too visible a satisfaction, declaring of his  
 own accord, without being called upon,  
 that a pious, conscientious woman, had, not  
 long before, been *justly burnt to death*, for  
 no other crime, but because she was an he-



retic, and would not recede from some opinions, which her respect for Christ had led her to embrace. By this avowal, so far as his own verdict went, he justified his judges in the like cruel and unrighteous sentence, which they soon after passed upon himself. For exactly in the same criminal light did he stand before them; *an heretic*, (to use his own words) *standing out against manifest articles of faith, contrarie to the Scriptures*, in their sense of them.

It would seem that Philpot had conversed concerning her particular opinions with this Kentish martyr, over whose ashes he insults with so much indecency; and as she was absolutely fixed in them, she had probably offended him by not paying that attention and regard to his arguments which he thought to be due to them, and by insisting that she was in the right faith, whatever he might pretend to the contrary. And where was the blame of adhering to what she was satisfied was the truth? Would she not have been to be condemned had she done otherwise?—But when he goes on to accuse her, that “she *stubbornely* maintained what is “contrary to God’s word;” as if that was  
sufficient

sufficient to authorize the most sanguinary proceedings against her; may not we say, What authority had he to call his fellow-creatures to account for their inward thoughts and dispositions? Or how could Mr. Philpot take upon him to decide, that if this person was in error, it was owing to the perverseness of her will, and obstinate refusal of better information? Was he fit to sit in judgment upon her, who was so much a stranger to the power of early prejudice over the human mind, as not to know that it will sometimes blind it against the clearest evidence? Could he descend into the heart, and discern what passed there? Her having submitted to die in torments, rather than give up or retract her sentiments, should have inclined him at least to have allowed, that she had taken them up from sincere conviction, and really believed that to be the truth of God for which she gave up her life.

IT seems that in the same prison into which Mr. Philpot was cast, were some of those early Unitarians, “who denied the Trinity, and the Divinity of Christ;” either  
 4 foreign

foreign Anabaptists, or more probably Englishmen, their converts and disciples: for Bishop (g) Burnet takes notice, in the year 1549, that many of the former were at that time in several parts of England, who were generally Germans, driven from their own country.

Mr. Strype, the same industrious historian so often quoted, has preserved a very singular *Apology* of Mr. Philpot, written by himself, and addressed to certain friends, who had much blamed him for some most insulting and passionate behaviour towards these his fellow-prisoners, in the disputes he had with them, and into which he seems to have first drawn them.

As it is very little known, I propose to transcribe some parts of it, and accompany it with remarks as I go along.

I do not give it the reader as a curiosity, although it will appear a very extraordinary one: since in that slight view of it, for the credit of Mr. Philpot and of human nature, I should rather think it ought to have been forever buried and obliterated. For to me it seems hardly possible to fix a deeper stain and reproach

(g) History of the Reformation, Vol. I. p. 105.



proach upon the character of a professed disciple of Christ, than is exhibited in the temper and demeanour of Mr. Philpot towards these depressed unfortunate men, who differed from him on some points which he held sacred, but which they could see no foundation for in the Scriptures. Nor are his arguments more to be approved than his temper; though Mr. Strype thought otherwise, and has commended him more than he ought to have done.—

—But I have chosen to insert it here, because some portion of the same evil leaven, and intolerant spirit, however of late years much abated, is still found in too many; and ready to vent itself, if occasion offered, and power were not wanting, against those who entertain the like sentiments of the *proper humanity of Christ*, which were embraced by the men who are here so ill treated. And I am not without hope also, that the *hideous deformity* of the picture, beheld in another person, who lived so long ago as Mr. Philpot; and the observations made upon his most unchristian behaviour, if well founded, may steal a secret approbation from some, whose prejudices hitherto have never permitted

permitted them to see such things in their true light; and lead them to perceive the utter irreconcilableness of such a temper to that of a true disciple of Christ; and how unfit any one must be to appear in the presence of a merciful God, breathing nothing but the most bitter imprecations and destruction for ever, against a fellow-christian, perhaps under fewer errors than themselves; but certainly, equally sincere, and therefore equally acceptable to the righteous judge of all.

I reckon also, that it will enable me, as we go along, to illustrate some parts of Scripture not generally well understood; and to rectify the abuse of other passages, which have been, and are still wrested from their true sense, thereby to foment and encourage in some persons, an everlasting inexorable aversion and hatred to those who interpret the sacred volume differently from themselves, especially in what relates to the person of Jesus Christ.

MR. *Philpot's* first setting out does not promise very fair and candid treatment of his  
Opponent.

Opponent. For in the *title*, which he prefixes to his little tract, he speaks of those whom he calls *Arians*, in the most abusive terms; so that an unguarded reader, who had implicit confidence in his judgment, would be apt thence to conclude them to be the worst of men. Yet he afterwards allows them to be of unblemished morals, though he calls their's a *counterfeit* holiness; where also he accuses them of *pretending to live without sin*: which shews however that their principles did not lead them to allow themselves in any thing they knew to be evil. This *title*, and the opening of his accusation of them, and defense of himself, is as follows.

(L) *An Apology of JHON PHILPOT: written for spitting upon an Arian: with an invective against the Arians, the verie natural children of Antichrist: With an admonition to all that be faithfull in Christ, to beware of them, and of other late sprung heresies, as of the most enemies of the gospell.*

Philpot. *I am amased, and do tremble both in body and sowle, to heare at this day*  
*certain*

(L) Strype's Historical Memorials, chiefly Ecclesiastical, Vol. II. Appendix, p. 145.



*certain men, or rather not men, but covered with man's shape, parsons of a bestly understanding, who, after so many benefyts and graces of our Lorde God and Saviour Jesus Christ, declared to be both God and man by the spirit of sanctification, the eternal son of God——, notwithstanding are not ashamed to robbe this eternal Son of God and our most merciful Saviour of his infinite majesty, and to plucke him out of the glorious throne of his unspeakable deity.*

*Remark.* We have here evidently the language of passion, and a heated disorderly imagination. Why should he pronounce these *Arians* beasts and not men, because their opinions concerning Christ did not come up to his own? Or why reproach them on that account, with the want of a proper love and respect for Christ? If he had been more cool and confiderate, he would have been far from accusing them of knowingly depriving Christ of any dignity, which they thought properly to belong to him; and would have found, that they refrained from ascribing *infinite majesty*, or *deity* to him, because they were persuaded it appertained only to HIM, who was *the God and Father of all*; and be-

H

cause

cause Christ himself always ascribed it to HIM, and never arrogated any thing of the kind to himself.

Had these men been as angry as their accuser, they might have retorted upon him, that he was more guilty of blasphemy against the majesty of Jehovah, the most high God, in making Christ to be another God equal to HIM, who had often declared by his prophets, that HE had *no equal*, and that there was *no other god besides HIM*.

But in whatever depth of error concerning God and Christ, Mr. Philpot was buried, his antagonists would have been equally censurable with him, if they had used any hard speeches against him, which might have implied in the most distant sort, that he would be condemned of God, or deserved hatred from men, for his opinions. Persons may hold very innocently the most erroneous sentiments in religion; and to point out these to them is sometimes a duty: but not to arraign and pronounce sentence against them, on that account.

Philpot. *O flaming fyerbronnies of hell, &c.* (as he goes on to exclaim and rail against them, p. 145.)—*what heart may bear such blasphemy?*

*blasphemy? what eye may quietly behold such an enemy to God? what membre of Christ may allowe in any wyse, such a membre of the Diuel? what christian may have fellowship with such Antichrists?* He proceeds then to call them, *the vile seed of the serpent to be crushed to peeces unto eternal wo after they have spewed out all their venym;—dead dogges blasphemously barking against our Lord;* with other like aggravation of the injuries, which he would have supposed to be done to Christ, by not allowing him to be the supreme God.

*Remark.* Was this proper language to be used towards a fellow-creature, following the light of God's word to the best of his understanding, and for so doing thrust into a dungeon, together with this Mr. Philpot, by their common enemy; doomed most probably, soon to be sent out of the world in lingring tortures as well as himself, and as resolved to suffer for what he believed to be the truth of Christ, as he was?

It is a very different method of treatment which *Acontius* above-mentioned, who lived in these times, prescribes to be used towards a dissenting fellow-christian. It may be use-



ful to contrast it with Mr. Philpot's conduct, and the pious humane reader will not be displeased with the length of the quotation. It is not necessary to cite the original.

“ Nothing is more to be avoided than the  
 “ saying or doing any thing, that may wound  
 “ the mind of the person you are disputing  
 “ with, or exasperate him against you. Of  
 “ this nature are all expressions of dislike and  
 “ disgust; all imputations of fraudulent design,  
 “ of ignorance, shameless effrontery,  
 “ or whatever may detract from his good  
 “ name. But you should strive by every act  
 “ of courtesy and humanity, to excite in him  
 “ a spirit of gentleness, moderation and benevolence.  
 “ Of which you can have no  
 “ better master and teacher than your own  
 “ charity and love for him: but then it must  
 “ be sincere, and not put on for show only.  
 “ And if you find you have it not, you had  
 “ better never attempt to say any thing to  
 “ him, 'till you have attained it.”

“ Should you however discover nothing  
 “ in the man himself to make you love him;  
 “ yet consider how much there is in God and  
 “ his beloved Son, from whom he is what he  
 “ is, to conciliate your regards and affection  
 “ for him. Had it not been the good pleasure  
 “ sure

“ sure of God, that he should still live and  
 “ act his part in the world, he would never  
 “ have been born, or instantly’ died after it,  
 “ or certainly not have had his life so far  
 “ prolonged. But now you see how God  
 “ nourishes and takes care of him, so as to  
 “ make his sun to shine upon him as much  
 “ as upon yourself, and cause him in a  
 “ thousand ways to share in his infinite  
 “ beneficence and goodness. Do you there-  
 “ fore, who are God’s servant, imagine,  
 “ that you are to be less kindly affected to-  
 “ wards such a one, yourself? How know  
 “ you, but he may be one of the Lord’s  
 “ sheep, which though it wander now  
 “ from the rest of the flock, full of  
 “ disease, will in time be found by the good  
 “ shepherd, and healed, and brought back  
 “ to his fold? But, if it be so, do not you  
 “ perceive, that it is Christ, who presents  
 “ himself to you, weak and sick, in the  
 “ person of his servant, to make trial of  
 “ your love to him, which he will remember  
 “ at a future day? And since it belongs not  
 “ to you to determine, whether it will be so  
 “ or no, it ought to suffice you that he pos-  
 “ sibly may become such : so that whatever

“ kind office you do to him, the Lord Jesus  
 “ will take as done to himself. Do not  
 “ therefore look at the man as he is in him-  
 “ self, but in the relation he thus bears to  
 “ Christ, whose wonderful love to yourself  
 “ you will do well to remember. For holy  
 “ and innocent as he was, he thought it not  
 “ too much to subject himself to the most  
 “ painful death for you the greatest of sin-  
 “ ners. Oh ! if we had but the least sus-  
 “ picion that any one would be raised to an  
 “ earthly kingdom and become an excellent  
 “ prince, how far should we be from de-  
 “ spising such a one, or rather how much  
 “ should we respect him, notwithstanding  
 “ his present low and obscure condition ?  
 “ And yet, what is the most exalted regal  
 “ state and honour, compared with the dig-  
 “ nity and splendor that belongs to God’s  
 “ chosen servants. And shall we think him  
 “ unworthy of our kind treatment and re-  
 “ gards, who may be born to inherit this  
 “ glory.—To such reflexions as these, you  
 “ should join frequent and ardent suppli-  
 “ cation to God, that he would soften your  
 “ own heart, and plant in it a genuine and  
 “ lively charity, from whose influence and  
 “ guidance



“ guidance you will learn such proper and  
 “ fuitable ways of dealing with an erring  
 “ brother, that you cannot fail of soon  
 “ bringing him back to just and right senti-  
 “ ments.” *Acontii Stratagem.* p. 74, &c.

Philpot.) *How may we with patience abide to beare the robbery of our Christ's equality with God, who, as St. Paul witnesseth, thought it no robbery to be equal with God? What faithfull servant can be content to beare his Master blasphemed? and if perchance he shew any just anger therefore, all honest men do beare with his doing in that behalf. And cannot you, christian bretherne and sisterne, bear with me, who, for the just zeal of the glory of my God and Christ being blasphemed by an arrogant, ignorant, and obstinately blinded Arian, making hymself equal with Christ; saying, that God was none otherwyse in Christ, than God was in hym, making hym to be but a creature as he was hymself, pretending you to be without synne as well as Christ? Cannot you bear with me, if after all this, I did spyt on him? Partly as a declaration of that sorrow which I had to beare such a proud blasphemer of our Saviour; as also to signify unto other these pre-*

*sent, whom he went about to pervert, that he was a parson to be abhorred of all christians, and not to be companied withal.*

*Remark.* Of what vast consequence is it, that the *word of God*, delivered by holy men, his prophets and apostles, should be faithfully and honestly represented, in all translations of it, and in the mother tongue in every country! This is one of those important points, which christians in high place, and of eminent abilities, should attend to, and for the neglect of which they will be accountable. I speak not of the *clergy*, as they are called, distinct from the *laity*, as if it were a matter peculiar to them; for the Scriptures know not any such distinction: it belongs equally to all that are the disciples of Christ. And the suffering such a false account of St. Paul's words, as Mr. Philpot here sets out with, to remain in our English translation, is one cause of the like bitterness and savage animosity, which we often find vented now by others, against their fellow-christians; as if they had a design to rob *Christ* of something that really belonged to him, and which he was jealous of maintaining, *by denying him to be equal with God.*

Whereas,

Whereas, if instead of putting it, that Christ *thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, it were translated as it is well known, it ought to be, that *he was not grasping,* or *greedily ambitious to be like unto God*; that is, to be *like him*, in displaying the godlike power of working miracles which he had received from him; every one would then see, that the apostle here teaches Christ to have been a creature of God, and dependent upon him, as much as in any other part of his writings. But to return to our subject.

It appears from this and other parts of Mr. Philpot's *Apology*, that he had offended many of his pious friends, by his unwarrantable and indecent act towards the person with whom he was disputing. But rather than own himself in the least blameable for it, he labours to paint and set forth the provocation given him in the strongest and most odious colours. Taking therefore this along with us, that we hear one side only, and have the representation of an angry adversary; and that passion always magnifies the faults and errors of those we dislike; with these abatements made, we shall find nothing reported by him, as alleged



leged or maintained by this *Arian*, for which the man might not have good authority in the Scriptures.

One of Mr. Philpot's accusations of him, to justify his own unworthy behaviour towards him, is, *that he held Christ to be a creature*. But was there any crime in this, if he was persuaded of it, from the holy Scriptures; and if he believed, which indeed is the fact, that Christ never spoke of himself in any other way, nor ever said that he was any other than a creature? Among many others, *one most plain and demonstrative proof of this, not commonly attended to, nor so much insisted on as it ought to have been*, is, our Lord's continually calling God *his Father*, the Father of himself, equally (Joh. xx. 17.) as of the rest of mankind; and using this appellation whenever he spoke of him, or invoked him in prayer. *For this was proclaiming to all the world, and telling to all that heard him then, or that can read or hear his words now; that he, the holy Jesus, was God's creature, as much and in the same manner as your calling God your Father, and invoking him by that name, whoever you be that cast your eye on*  
*this*

*this book, implies that you are God's creature.*

But this *Arian* gave offence by saying, that *God was no otherwise in Christ, than in himself*. If we had been also told upon what occasion, or in what connection of his discourse, the man had advanced an assertion of this kind, it would have been readily seen, I doubt not, that he was well justified in it. As it is, we may presume, that he was probably shewing, that the Scripture phrase of *God being in Christ* (2 Cor. v. 19. John xiv. 10.) was no argument of his being God: for that God was also in the apostles and many of the first christians, to whom gifts of an extraordinary divine power were communicated, in the same manner that *HE* was in Christ, though not in the same degree; since we are told that *unto Jesus* (Joh. iii. 34.) *God gave not the spirit by measure*. And he might maintain, that his opinion of this matter, was confirmed by our Saviour himself, in many of his discourses; in which he speaks of the power by which he himself acted, as well as his disciples. For, Matth. x. 19, 20. where he is furnishing what might encourage them, under the difficulties,

ficulties, in which he foretold they would be involved, in bearing testimony to the gospel before the powers of this world, and in the highest courts of civil judicature; *When they deliver you up, says he, be not over-anxious how or what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father, that speaketh in you.* Which is precisely the same language that he uses concerning himself, and the power by which he wrought miracles and uttered his divine instructions, Joh. xiv. 10; when he makes this reply to a question put to him by one of his disciples: *Believest thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto You, I speak not of myself; and the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works;* that is, his extraordinary wisdom and power were owing to *the Father, or the spirit of the Father* dwelling in him: which divine assistance given to him, is expressed in the same terms as that vouchsafed to his disciples. And as many have supposed, in all times, that a like extraordinary assistance of the spirit or power of God, is afforded to all pious christians, in trying situations, to carry them forward  
 in



in their virtuous course; this *Arian* might probably be of this sentiment, and so might say, without any just cause of offence, that *God was none otherwyse in Christ, than he was in him.*

It is farther also made matter of blame to this person, that he should say, and tell others, that *they were to be without sin, as well as Christ.* Upon what occasion he said this we are not told. But whatever he intended by the comparison, far from any arrogance, I have no doubt, which is the unfriendly construction that a violent adversary puts upon it; it shews, that he aspired after holiness and christian perfection, and taught them to others.

But Mr. Philpot represents his own case in a far more favourable light than it will bear, when he alleges that it was sorrow for what he thought was a dishonour to Christ, that made him commit an act of such indecent insult and violence towards this *Arian*. So might the brutal Bp. Bonner, Mr. Philpot's judge, have defended himself, that it was sorrow for the heretics contempt of the catholic truth, that led him sometimes, when they refused to listen to his arguments

ments and defended their own sentiments in his presence, to fall upon them and beat them most unmercifully. Real sorrow and concern for any unworthy sentiments which men had let fall concerning God or Christ, and still persisted in, would never vent itself in passionate expressions or violent outrage against their persons. No : it was indignation and a train of far worse passions, to find himself opposed, and his arguments and authority slighted by a person whom he thought so much beneath him in all respects, that excited Philpot at the moment to an act of such rudeness and contempt ; and he should not have gone about thus to defend himself in it.

Philpot. *If this my fact seme to them, that judge not all things according to the spirit of God, uncharitable, yet let them know, that God, who is charity, allowith the same. For it is written yn the gospel, that Christ came not to set us at peace with men yn the earth, but at division ; and that is for his cause and trewth. And whosoever will not abide with Christ's church in the trewth, we ought not to shew the poyntes of Charity unto any such, but to take him as a heathen and a publican.*

*If*

*If any man, saith St. John, bring not unto you this doctrine which I have taught ye, say not, God sped unto him: for whoso sayth, God sped unto such a one, is partaker of his evill doyngs. Consider you therfor, who have love and fellowship with such, that the same damnation shall fall upon you therfor, as is due to wicked heretycks.*

*Remark.* It is no unusual thing for religious persons of strong passions and high conceit of their own infallibility, to make the Almighty Being a party to any thing, however wrong, which they do. But if Mr. Philpot could prove what he attempts, that Christ and his apostles give encouragement to such an unmerciful disposition as he here glories in, and to such unseemly injurious behaviour towards a fellow christian, without any other provocation than that of entertaining different sentiments in some points from him, there would be but too much reason for the objections of unbelievers to christianity on these accounts. But he will be found altogether a false interpreter of Scripture as might be well expected.

For,



Matth. x. 34.  
explained.

For, (1.) in that prediction and forewarning which Christ gave his disciples, of the reception which they themselves and his religion would meet with from the world; Matth. x. 34. *Think not, that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword:* he is far from speaking of the design of his mission, or tendency of his doctrine, which were the very contrary: but he only declares the evils and disturbances which both would innocently produce, through the opposition of worldly minded men at first, among the jews and heathens, and their persecution of his followers. And if, as some suppose, through the foreknowledge given to him from God, he here carries his eye farther, to the no less horrible, and more lasting cruelties which his own followers would afterwards exercise one against another, to serve the views of a worldly ambition, or to gratify their pride and narrow prejudices: so far from recommending such *uncharitable fact for his cause and trewth*, as Mr. Philpot here pleads, and softly terms it; our Lord on the contrary, in this passage severely condemns

demns it, as most opposite to the design of his religion, though among some of the foreseen consequences of it.

2. He is no less mistaken in his application of Matth. xviii. 15, &c.—  
Matth. xviii. 15—17.  
explained.

*Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the congregation: but if he neglect to hear the congregation, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican.*

Our Lord is there giving a rule for discipline, or for the better ordering of their voluntary religious societies, congregations, or churches, into which he presumes his followers would form themselves; when he tells them, that if, after frequent private admonitions as well as public, any one of their members should still persist in his ill behaviour, he was then to be unto them as *a heathen man, or a publican.* A wise and  
I
necessary

necessary counsel : that it might be known that he did not seek to have a crowd of any sort of men to be his followers, but those only who were seeking to become wise, and virtuous, and good.

But it is to be noted, that he orders this way of proceeding only with regard to such as had committed a *trespass*, that is, done a flagrant injury to others ; and is far from authorizing them thereby to call in question, or to usurp any authority over a fellow christian, who only differed from them in religious sentiments : which could be no *injury* to any one. And moreover, the being bid to consider such obstinate injurious persons, as *beaten men* and *publicans*, was merely a disowning of them as belonging to the christian society, and nothing more : but not to touch a hair of their heads, as we speak ; much less to outrage or insult them. For the gospel enjoins it's votaries to bear injuries patiently, not to inflict them upon any. These were not the weapons of the christian warfare, nor the instruments of extirpating error, or bringing men to see the truth.

3. Mr. Philpot strangely perverts another passage in the second epistle of John, and  
draws



draws a shocking inference from it ; when he declares to his friends, to whom he is making his apology for his blameable behaviour to these Arians, in prison with him ; that if they shewed any love or regards for the poor creatures, *wicked heretycks*, as he calls them, *the same damnation which was due to them, would fall upon themselves.*

The good old apostle's words are these, (2 John ver. 10, 11.) 2 John, ver. 10, 11. explained.

*If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine ; receive him not into your house, neither bid him, God speed. For he that biddeth him, God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.* And he will be found herein, far from commending or countenancing any ill treatment, or distant unhospitable carriage of christians one towards another, on account of disputes and differences concerning some points of the gospel among themselves.

The case, of which St. John speaks, was peculiar to the persons of the apostles, and to those times ; and no precedent for any that came after them. For he refers to many *Deceivers*, (as he calls them, ver. 7.) *who had entered into the world, i. e. had taken*

upon themselves the character of gospel-preachers, *who confess not*, says he, *that Jesus, who came in flesh, is the Christ*; (H) that is, who did not allow that he was a mortal man, subject to infirmities, sufferings, and death; but was all this in appearance only.

Now, without taking upon him a power of knowing the hearts of men, (which belongs only to God, or to those to whom he gives it on any particular occasion, and the apostle lays in no such claim here) St. John might pronounce these men *Deceivers*; because it was not in an opinion or sentiment, but a matter of fact, concerning Christ, in which he avers them to be mistaken, and in which they must have been very blameable and conceited to have persisted, after he had let them know their error. Because he could speak with the fullest assurance of the falseness of their assertions from his own knowledge, as he had lived and been most intimately acquainted with Christ; and had the most perfect as-  
surance

(H) That so the apostle's words ought to be translated, and not as in our present English version; See

“The Catechist, or an Inquiry into the doctrine concerning the only true God, &c. p. 119. note.”

furance that he was a man as other men were ; and, as another apostle speaks, (Hebr. iv. 15.) *in all points tempted like as we are ; yet without sin.*

Such a doctrine as this, therefore, of Christ being a man in appearance only, and incapable of pain or suffering, going to the very foundations of christianity, and quite destroying the efficacy of his example, and the meritorious seal and testimony which he gave at last to the truth of his divine mission, and the cause of the gospel, by dying for it ; well did it become the apostle to forbid his christian friends, to give countenance to and associate with those who *brought such a doctrine*, i. e. who came with a view to propagate it, lest they should be deceived by their wily arts. For he well discerned, how plausible it would sound to many, though directly contrary to what he knew to be the plain fact ; when it was artfully insinuated to them, *that they ought not to entertain so low and degrading an idea of the Saviour of the world, as to imagine he could be subject to the same feelings and infirmities as we poor mortals are ; that he must be something vastly above all this ; and there-*



fore they ought not to think so injuriously of him, but to believe that *though he appeared to be a mortal man, he was not really such*. But then, the apostle does not licence them to treat such persons with contempt, or to injure them, to deny them a night's lodging, or a meal's meat, or any present relief they might stand in need of; but only *not to receive them into their house, and bid them, God speed*; that is, not to welcome them with the same cordiality, and press them to take up their abode with them as long as suited them, as they did other christians, and were often exhorted to do, and commended for, in those times and places, when there were no inns or convenient houses of entertainment for travellers, as with us; and when the preachers of the gospel, in particular, wandered about, poor, and stript of all their worldly possessions. In short, they were to avoid, as much as possible, the consorting with these men, lest they should give countenance and sanction to their great corruption of the true doctrine concerning Christ, or become tainted with it themselves.

But

But this wise caution of the apostle did not avail to stop the evil, though it corrected it for the present. For the great mistakes concerning the person of Christ, which followed, and which continue to this day, have sprung from this first error, as from their source; from christians being ashamed of the reproach of the cross, of Christ crucified; unwilling to confess a mortal man, who was put, though most unjustly, and in the noblest cause, to the death of a slave and malefactor, to be their Saviour and the author of their religion; unless at the same time they must suppose, and make him to be, the most high God; or a great stupendous being, next to the most high God, and creator of all things under him.

Philpot. *Never was there more abominable Belials than these Arians be. The ignorant Belials (meaning heathen men and papists) worship the creatures for the Creator; but these perverse Arians do worship Christ;—but as a creature like unto themselves.*

*Remark.* Nothing which these Arians do, can please him. Otherwise he must have been convinced, that they had a sincere reverence for Christ, although they believed

him not to be above the condition of a creature; because they worshiped him, by offering prayer to him. This, many Unitarians scrupled not, at that time, and afterwards; supposing Christ to be intitled to and qualified for it, by the gift of the Father, by the great power and dominion which God had conferred upon him for his perfect virtue and obedience unto death, in the cause of truth and righteousness. But, if they were mistaken in this practice, as they most probably were, *for without an expresse command for it, we are not to worship any being but God himself; and there is no divine command for worshipping Christ*: yet surely it was a venial error, and did not deserve such hard names and abuse.

Philpot. *Who can abide the eternal generation of the Son of God to be denied; since it is written of hym, His generation who shall be able to declare? Is there any trew harte that grudgeth not at such faithles blasphemoirs?—Should not the mouth declare the zeale for his Maker, by spytting on him that depraveth his divine majesty, which was, and is, and will be, God for ever?—If Christ, with a whippe, dryved out of the temple*



*temple such as were prophaners thereof, ought not the servant of God, by some lyk outward signification, to reprove the vilany of those, who go about to take away the glory of him that was the Builder of the temple?*

*Remark.* 1. It was not then unknown to the learned, and is Isaiah liii. 8. explained. now well known; that the prophet Isaiah, in the passage cited by Mr. Philpot, speaks not of any *eternal generation* of Christ, or of any existence that he had before he was born of his mother Mary; but either of that evil *age* or *generation* of men, among whom his lot was cast; or rather, (*b*) of his manner of life in this world, his unspotted innocence and virtue. But why must he, for interpreting this text differently from himself, call these men *faithles blasphemours*, who had examined the Scriptures, for aught he knew to the contrary, as sincerely and faithfully as he had done; and who spoke of Christ, in as high terms as they were persuaded he required of them, though not such as Mr. Philpot could be satisfied with? They *depraved not*, as he accuses them, the *divine majesty of Christ*; for they did not believe that

(*b*) See Bishop Lowth on Isaiah liii. 8.

that it was what belonged to him: but he should have been more careful of *depraving the divine majesty* of the Father of Christ, and of mankind, in ascribing to another what belonged to HIM alone.

It is with an ill grace that Mr. John ii. 15. Philpot seeks countenance for his explained. own passionate behaviour towards those who were far from intending any disrespect to Christ, from what Christ himself did to a set of worldly hypocritical Jews, who made no scruple of interrupting the devotions of the heathen worshipers by carrying on their trades in the part of the temple appropriated for them by Almighty God. We can draw no precedent for our own conduct from such instances as these, in which our Lord acted in his character of the great prophet and extraordinary messenger of the most high God to men. It is also always to be attended to, that every Jew, as being under a constitution of government immediately appointed by God, and administered by him, held it to be incumbent on him, in his own person, like Phineas, instantly to vindicate the honour of their divine law, and oppose the violation of it. The *whip of small cords* mentioned

mentioned by one of the evangelists, as being in our Lord's hands, might be of some use to drive the cattle out of the sacred place of worship, but could be but a very puny instrument of offence, to expell the men who were prophaning it. Nor was it at all wanted in that respect. They were sufficiently overawed by his divine power and authority, and the character and circumstances in which he then appeared. For, as (*I*) one well remarks; “ in what our Lord did to the buyers and  
 “ sellers in the temple, he is not to be con-  
 “ sidered as one single man only, but as at  
 “ the head of an infinite number of people,  
 “ all acknowleging him at that time for their  
 “ *Messiah* and *King*, and therefore ready to  
 “ support him in any reformation that he  
 “ should attempt.” May not this also be considered as a kind of symbolical action, wherein by commanding and causing the temple to be cleared for the gentiles, Jesus inculcated that the time was come, when all the nations would be invited to become the church and people of God, equally with the Jews?

Philpot.

(*I*) See Bishop Pearce's works, Vol. II. p. 344, &c.



Philpot.—*But these wicked Arians, as their corrupt faces bashe not to deny the eternal Son of God, so are they not ashamed to deny the Holy Ghost to be God: their forehed is lyke the forehed of a whore, hardened with counterfeited hypocrisy. Stiff-necked wretches they are, that will not yelde to the trewth, though it be never so manifestly laid before their face. They have sworne to run after their master the Diuel without stay, and to draw with them as many as they can, in the which they are diligent. The Lord confound them, &c. &c. &c.*

*Remark.* I apprehend that the sentiment, that the Holy Ghost, or Spirit, is not a being distinct from God, or a Divine Person, who is to be worshiped, is now become very general among christians that look into the Scriptures at all for themselves; though Mr. Philpot was ignorant of this truth, and loads with such heavy reproach these men, who saw it in that early day. It may furnish us with one or two useful remarks, and relieve the reader, to mention an instance of a better spirit and treatment, about a century after, in a like case.

When

(i) When the pious and learned “ John Biddle, the Unitarian, was at Gloucester, says the Oxford Historian, under bail for his appearance before the Parliament, for his opinions concerning the *Deity of the Holy Ghost*; about the month of June 1646, the learned Usher, Primate of Ireland, travelled through that city in his way to London; and having before heard of him, spoke to and used him with all fairness and pity, as well as with strength of argument, to convince him of his dangerous error; telling him, that either he was in a damnable error, or else that the whole church of Christ, who had in all ages worshiped the Holy Ghost, had been guilty of idolatry.”

This worthy Prelate was mistaken, or his sentiments are misrepresented by the historian, in asserting that the Holy Ghost (*holy Spirit* rather) was worshiped in all ages by the whole church of Christ. Whereas it is notorious, that we have no account of any such thing 'till the fourth century. However, if such an abuse had crept in and begun  
in

(i) Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, Vol. II. p. 300.

in the very time of the apostles, and was contrary to what they taught, it argued the stronger necessity to discard it immediately. In a matter of such importance as the true object of divine worship, we should not be backward or ashamed to own our errors and renounce them, for fear of consequences to what has been long established and held sacred.

*Usher* speaks too much according to the savage and ignorant prejudices of the times, in calling the denial of the deity of the Holy Ghost, *a damnable error*. For supposing that Biddle had been mistaken in his particular opinion concerning the holy Spirit; as it was an error that flowed from honest inquiry, and led him to nothing immoral, nor inspired him with any malevolence or unkind thoughts towards others, one of the Archbishop's character and education should not have used such coarse, ill tempered language, which tended to stir up men's evil passions against the person of whom he spoke. But he should have frankly acknowledged, that error so circumstanced could not be damnable, nor in the least degree dangerous, or unfavourable to any  
man's



man's future happiness. Infallibility is the attribute of God alone.

Philpot. *I marvel that there should be so little zeale in a trew christian harte, that it can seme to take the part of an Arian. We cannot serve Christ and Baal. If you be unfaynedly of the trewth, abyde in the trewth, and let all your will be towards the professors of the trewth in the unity of Christ's church; lest you may appear to be scatterers with heretycks, rather than gatherers with Christ. Do ye not see what a rabble of new found scatterers there be, such a sort as never at ons have byn hearde of yn one realme, the one contrary to the other, so that the Diuel might have seemed to have powred owt all his poisons at ons against the gospell. And will you that glory of the trewth, go abowt by word, dede, or help, to mayntayne any such in their bedy errours? He that toucheth pytche, cannot chuse but defile his fingers therewith.—St. Paul, writing unto Titus, commandeth all christian parsons to avoid an heretyk after ons or twyce warning, knowing that such a one is perverted and sinneth, and is damned by his owne judgment.*

*Remark.*

*Remark.* Here and in many other places the Arian and his friends are upbraided with *breaking the unity of Christ's church*. This is an imposing, fine—sounding word, that acts like a charm upon many; and might have in it something worth attending to, if it related to any thing of Christ's own appointment. But when it is really nothing but rejecting the opinions of men, however learned, however many in number, and in however long a succession, to keep more closely to the words of Christ, and interpret them for a man's self; the more such unity is broken, the better; as it has generally been nothing but an unity in error. Was it not in the same way, in the use of his own private judgment, by interpreting the Scriptures for himself, that Mr. Philpot, with others, had lately *broken the unity of Christ's church*, in separating themselves from the Romish church? And why will he condemn another for taking the same liberty of thinking for himself, and differing, where he saw cause, from him or others, in any opinion or conclusion, merely of men, of however long standing?

He rails at these *Arians*; and calls them, in a scornful way, *a rabble of new-found scatterers*, &c. But did not the Papists, by whose authority himself and this Arian were cast into prison, consider them both alike, and speak in the same terms of him, as well as of Cranmer, Ridley, Latymer, and many others at that time? If these *Arians scattered the good seed of the word of God*, or honestly and sincerely intended it, and gave no just offence to the civil powers; neither he, nor the Papists, nor any power on earth, could condemn, or with justice interpose and prevent them. Whether they did right or not, belonged to another power and jurisdiction, than that of men.

But when he would counsel his friends, not to keep company with these *Arians*, as being in the number of those *self-condemned heretics*, whom St. Paul speaks of, (Titus iii. 10, 11.) he should have known; that such *honest, conscientious men*, could never come under that description, viz. *the man that is an heretic, after his first and second admonition, reject; knowing, that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.*

K

A truly



Titus iii. 10, 11.  
explained.

A truly learned and good man, lately gone to rest, has set this passage in its true light, (*k*) and fully proved, that what is here said, relates to those times, and to one particular person, *the heretic*, as the apostle calls him, or the causer of divisions among them, by mixing jewish fables (Tit. i. 14.) with the gospel; whom he here points out. And he represents Titus, as *knowing* the man *to sin*, and to be *self-condemned*; not from any *supernatural* knowlege, which himself or Titus had of the human heart, but from the man's adulterating the truth of the gospel with such foreign mixtures, which Titus and all others were persuaded the apostles never taught; and because the man himself could not but be convinced in his own conscience, that he never received such doctrines from the apostles.

It is well known how much this passage of the apostle has been abused in former times, to encourage christians in their persecutions of one another. As it now stands in our english version, common readers will  
be

(*k*) Bishop Pearce's Sermons, Vol. IV. p. 277.

be apt to conclude from it, that there is a certain class of christians, called *heretics* in the Scriptures, teaching wrong and bad doctrines, especially in denying the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of Christ; (for to those things in particular the term has been applied and confined) and who, on this account, are to be considered and avoided as infectious persons, that poison the minds of those who converse with them, and would endanger their eternal salvation.

But the Scripture knows no such use, or appropriation of the terms, *heresy*, or *heretic*.

*Heresy*, αἵρεσις, signifies a sect, or division of men; holding certain opinions. St. Paul, in his speech before Agrippa, says; (Acts xxvi. 5.) *after the most exact sect, or heresy, [αἵρεσιν] of our religion, I lived a Pharisee.*

A *heretic* then, or *sectary*, for the words are synonymous, may be a praiseworthy or blameable character, according to the grounds on which he goes, and for which he divides or separates himself from others. St. Paul intimates, in another defense of himself before the Roman governour; that

although his adversaries accused him of making causeless divisions, of being a heretic, or sectary in the bad sense of the word, by adjoining himself to the christians; he had the approbation of his own mind in what he had done, and gloried in it: (Acts xxiv. 14.) *I confess unto thee, that after the way that they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers.*

The *heretic*, or *sectary*, in religion, is at such times only a blameable character, when out of views of temporal power or profit, or any like sinister motives, and not from a conscientious regard for truth, he begins, cherishes, and continues divisions in the christian society; like the man here censured by Paul.

The attentive reader, who considers, Titus i. 10, 15. and the connection of the present injunction of Paul to Titus, (iii. 10, 11.) with what immediately precedes it, will find, that it may thus justly be rendered into english: *The causer of divisions among you, (by introducing doctrines which he knows do not belong to the gospel) after the first and second admonition, have no society with; as you are fully convinced that*  
*he*



*he must be wholly perverted, and a bad man ; because he knows in his own conscience, that he asserts what is false.*

If then christians will call others *heretics*, by way of reproach, for not holding with them in their opinions about the doctrine of the Trinity and Divinity of Christ, or any other opinions, and think it right to shun each others company on such accounts, and to hate and persecute one another, as this Mr. Philpot advises ; they must seek for other authorities, and not quote this passage of St. Paul's epistle, nor his example, to countenance them in such practice.

One remark may properly come at the close of this account. We have been endeavouring here, and in a former instance, p. 115, to explain the conduct of two of the apostles ; and I hope it has been done so as to acquit them of blame in both cases. We are however under no necessity of justifying the apostles of Christ in all that they did. They are no examples to us any farther than as they acted with propriety, and free from the undue influence of passion, against which they sometimes offended, and to their honour, made no scruple of telling the wrong things they

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did.

did. This shews that they were honest men, and spoke the truth, though it made against themselves: a circumstance which adds great strength to their general testimony concerning the facts of the gospel.

Philpot. *Thus have I touched to give you warning, how to behave yourselves with the Arians, and other schismatyks and heretyks, whom all godly order, and good learning displeaseth.—If you heare there is contention betwyne us and them that be in prison, marvel not therefor, nether let your mynds be alienated from the trewth any thyng therby: for as it is written, it is necessary that heresies should be, that the elect might be tried. Christ and Antichrist can never agree.—Such Antichrists be they as breke the unity of Christ's church, nether abyde in the same, nether submitte their judgment to be tried in the causes which they brable for, by the godly learned pastors therof: but arrogantly deprave them, and take upon themselves to be teachers, before they have learned; affirming they cannot tell what, and speakyng evill of that which they know not. Prowde they are, and puffed up yn the imagination of their owne blynd senses, and judge themselves best of all other, because*  
they

*they can make a pale face of hypocrisy to the world, and cast a glass of dissembling water before the eyes of the simple people, as the Arians do.—Still they have the Scriptures in their mouths, and cry, the Scripture, the Scripture——. And when they be by the word rightly alleaged overthrowen, and they have not with reason what to reply, yet will they never be confounded, but either depart yn fury, or els stop their eares at the sayings of the wise charmer, like deaf serpents; or els fall to scolding, which is their surest divinity to fight withal. And if perchance any of them be soberer than other, their answer is; I pray you; let us alone. Our conscyens is satisfyed. You labour but in vayne to go about to turn us. For in self love, blindness, and vayne hypocrisy thes heretyks continue, be they never so charitably or learnedly informed.*

*Remark.* Historians tell us, that (L)  
 “ the unhappy divisions and quarrels among  
 “ the protestants, who were under the cross  
 “ and in prison together, gave great advantage to the common adversary, the Papist;  
 “ who

(L) Burnet; and Neal's History of the Puritans, Vol. I. p. 105.



“ who blazed abroad their infirmities, and  
 “ said, *they were suffering for they knew not*  
 “ *what (l)*. It was surely an ill chosen time  
 “ for disputes. Their situation and the bit-  
 “ ter passage through which they were soon  
 “ to go into the other world, should have  
 “ taught them more kindness and forbear-  
 “ ance towards one another.”

But we shall be inclined to make all candid allowance for such things, when we consider the general mistake which christians then lay under, and which is not yet intirely removed; that certain opinions concerning the supposed deity of Christ, concerning Original Sin,  
 Pre-

(l) “ One thing now fell out, which caused some disturbance among the prisoners. Many of them that were under restraint for the profession of the gospel, were such as held Free-will, to the derogation of God’s grace; and refused the doctrine of Absolute Predestination, and Original Sin. They were men of very strict and holy lives, but hot in their opinions and disputations, and unquiet.”——“ Besides these Antipredestinarians, there were some few who lay in prison for the gospel, who were Arians, and disbelieved the Divinity of Jesus Christ. Two of these lay in the King’s Bench. These different opinions occasioned such unseemly quarrelsome disputes among them, that the Marshal was fain to separate them one from another.”

Strype’s Life of Cranmer, p. 350, 352.

Predestination, and the like, were necessary to salvation ; which made them anxious and restless to bring all persons to embrace them. These Arians probably were in fault, as all are apt to be too eager to gain over others to opinions which they think important. But Mr. Philpot seems to have been the chief aggressor. For such were his intemperate zeal and haughtiness, that he could not bear with patience those that differed from him in any point, but especially on the subject of the Trinity, and Divinity of Christ. And from his own words we learn ; that when some of these persons wished to be quiet, and not to wrangle for ever, he would not let them alone.

His proposed method of terminating their disputes, would not be likely to be successful or accepted. For he required them to submit their judgment, and refer themselves to *their godly and learned pastors and teachers* ; i. e. to himself, and others of like sentiments. He owns, that they professed to follow the Scriptures only ; which is to their honour : but because they would make use of their own understandings, and not implicitly receive his interpretation of them, he rails at and abuses them. In short, he was mortified

fied to find himself opposed, and baffled perhaps, by unlearned men. For these Unitarians seem to have had a sound and rational way of defending their opinion; and would find no difficulty in answering and confuting his arguments, whose force chiefly lay in declamation, and in texts of Scripture misunderstood, and ill applied.

Philpot. *Now will I turne to the Arian again, who transfigureth himself into an angel of light, as Satan oftentimes doeth, that he might under the cloke of holines more mightily deceve the simple folk. And verely he is a Diuel incarnate; he hath a name that he lyveth, and indede is deade. Judge them not by their outwarde shew, wheryn they extolle themselves wonderfully, and dazel simple mens eys like larks. For our Master Christ prophesied of such false hypocrates to come, gevyng us warning to beware of such as pretend the simplicity of a shepe outwardly, and yet inwardely are ravening wolfes, devouring the sowles and bodies of men unto perdition.—Who be such Judases unto Christ as thes Arians, which cease not to betray hym of his eternal deity?—Even so shall the Lord destroy thes unbelieving Arians, whom he did once throughe baptisme deliver from the bondage*



*dage of synne, because they have forsaken the deity of Christ their original justice, and compared hym unreverently and ungodly to themselves ; to whom eternal fire belongeth, which is prepared for the Diuel, and for thes Arians, his chise angels. Worse are they than the Diuel, which, in Matth. viii. did acknowledged hym to be the eternal Son of God.—— But thes Hell-hounds are offended at his eternal majesty, and wold have hym no better than themselves, by creation. Is this the profession of Christ, o ye Antichrists ? Doth your fayned holliness tend to this end, to dishonour hym that is most holliest ?——O you painted hypocrites, doth your counterfeited love, and dissembling patience, go abowt to debase the eternal love of God his beloved Son, o ye haters of God !*

*Remark.* Making due allowance for the violence of Mr. Philpot's passions and prejudices, one easily perceives, notwithstanding what he says against them, that these Arians were harmless, kind-hearted, well disposed creatures ; somewhat too vehement perhaps in maintaining their opinions, for which however they had but too much provocation, and a bad precedent to follow

in

in their antagonist. And it is much to their credit, that to prevent the pity and respect which would otherwise have been shewn them, he is forced to depreciate their characters, by calling them hypocrites ; whilst at the same time he owns that their outward demeanor was unblameable and innocent. His rule should have been, where such *good fruits* were produced, to own that the *tree was good* ; and where no evil appeared, to believe there was none ; and therefore surely ought to have refrained from denouncing the divine judgments against these men.

The indecent behaviour towards them, of which he here undertakes the defence, was not the way to reclaim them, if in error, and was most unbecoming a disciple of Christ. That heavenly teacher and Saviour was never wanting in ardent zeal for the glory of God, yet was mild and gentle to all that came to him ; and tenderness, compassion, and forbearance towards sincere and honest minds, however intangled in manifest errors, will meet with due honour and reward hereafter ; when the contrary behaviour will be condemned, even in those whose opinions were the most just and exact

concerning him, as springing from pride and evil unsubdued passions, which are the worst heresy of all others.

Mr. Philpot should not have set himself up as if he were to dictate to a fellow-christian, what he was to believe or not to believe, because he had not so much learning as himself; and happened not to be so well acquainted with the doctrines of churchmen, and the *fathers*, as they are called, in times past: but should have considered, that he and his fellow-disputant had one common Master, Christ, whose hearers were for the most part illiterate persons, and whose words, which in general are not difficult to be understood, are the only rule, by which himself and this Arian and all others were to be guided, in all things; and which each person is to interpret for himself, and not another for him; and none to be listened to, however learned or eminent, any further than as each person finds them to speak according to this rule.

*General remarks on this APOLOGY.*

WHAT excited this otherwise good man, and all the great protestant Reformers  
in



in general, to use such bitter, intemperate language, and oftentimes to proceed to the most cruel outrages against those who could not come up to their standard of belief in these points, were the following false principles and maxims :

1. It was a point with them commonly taken for granted, without hesitation, that all opposition to the doctrine of the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ, proceeded only from pride, wilful blindness and perverseness, hatred to God and his truth, and other bad dispositions. Accordingly Mr. Philpot all along, without scruple, treats those he calls *Arians*, much worse than he would have done persons of the most abandoned, profligate characters, reckoning their crime beyond all comparison more malignant. It is however difficult to account, how a belief of the One living and true God, the Father, being *God alone, and none other besides him*, should arise from some evil principle, any more than the additional belief of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, being each of them God, and equal to the Father. Why should we seek for other motives, when a love and desire of truth, and of thereby recommending themselves to the God of

truth,

truth, is the most natural one that can be supposed to influence men in their religious inquiries, and particularly to embrace such opinions as the result of those inquiries, whereby they may be likely to suffer in their wordly interests? “ There may be  
 “ (it is well (*M*) observed) as much lazy  
 “ sloth *in taking up with what is first*  
 “ *taught us*; and as much pride *in pre-*  
 “ *tending to high faith*, and in being ashamed to confess *our old long-defended opi-*  
 “ *nions to be at last nothing but sad mis-*  
 “ *takes*, as in any thing else.”

But in truth we have no grounds or pretensions whatsoever—to assert, that the religious persuasions of others, whatever they be, are espoused by them upon bad and interested views, and not owing to sincere conviction. Men’s actions, if wrong, lie open to censure: but the motives of their personal religious sentiments and conduct, are not within any human cognisance. They belong to an higher tribunal, where we have no claim or right to interfere and pronounce sentence, any way. *Who art thou*  
*that*

*that judgest another's (m) servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth.*

2. That none could be saved, or admitted to future happiness, but such as believed the doctrine of the Trinity and of the Divinity of Christ; was another maxim laid down by christians, after they began to make articles of faith for others, and exercise a lordly power and dominion in the church of Christ. And this caused all those, who assumed to themselves the name orthodox, to keep no measures of charity or common humanity with those who dissented from them on these points. For when men can bring themselves to look upon a fellow-creature as out of the favour of God on such accounts; they are too apt to take the matter out of his hands, and go before him in inflicting the punishment, they suppose to be deserved.

If such persons could have divested themselves of their prejudices, and taken time to consider the foundation of these conclusions, they must have been soon satisfied that there was some mistake in their interpretations of the Scripture, and in making the  
favour

(m) *Romans* xiv. 4. So our english version should be put; and not *another man's servant*: for GOD is the Master here intended.



favour of God to depend on the belief and admission of a doctrine, which they must at the least have allowed to be of an obscure, if not doubtful nature; since to many, in all ages, the direct contrary sentiment has appeared to be revealed in the Bible. And they must have been convinced, that a Being of all goodness could not cast off his creatures, and make them suffer for ever; or rather could not make them suffer at all, for the inevitable defects of their understandings; supposing them to be in an error in this respect. And it must favour of great self-conceit not to allow others, who see the same things in a different light, to be as honest and upright before God as ourselves, and therefore as acceptable to him, whatever involuntary mistakes about HIM and his revealed will they may fall into.

3. When men could entertain such unworthy sentiments of God, that he could doom his creatures to misery for ever for their misapprehensions concerning him, it was an easy step to conclude that he was angry with them, and thus transfer their own malignant passions to their Maker. This is Mr. Philpot's language and practice

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throughout; that those Arians, whom he justifies himself for maltreating, and calls upon others to do the same to them, and worse, were as much hated of God, as detested by himself. But that *great first* and *best* of Beings can never be displeased with his creatures for their opinions concerning himself, however disproportioned or inaccurate, to which they have been led by the weakness of their understandings, and not through want of due reverence for him, nor by any wilful perverseness, or blameable worldly view or design. Still less has this benevolent parent of all commissioned others, prince, priest, magistrate, or any of mankind, to be judges of the faith of others, and to use them cruelly, and persecute them for not being *sound* in it, i. e. for holding and maintaining different opinions from their pretended accusers and judges. But he will call to a severe account all those who arrogate such an authority to themselves, and will make them sensible of their demerits and of his just displeasure, in proportion to the misery they have inflicted on their brethren, or the still greater mischief they have done, in making them dis-

semble

semble through worldly motives of fear or gain; and in stopping free inquiry, which is the prime source of all truth, virtue, and happiness.

4. Another groundless presumption has been very current with those who have held Christ to be the most high God; which was, that he had great injury done him by those who maintained that he was any thing less than the supreme; and therefore that it became them to resent the injury, and to silence and punish all such persons. “ *If Moyses, (says Mr. Philpot, p. 148.) be commended by the Scripture for striking an Egyptian, that did injury to one of the people of God; how may he justly be blamed, which did but spyt at hym, that doeth such injury and sacrilege to the Son of God, as to pluck him from his eternal and proper godhed?*” And again. “ *Speak ye that have tongues to praise and confess God, against thes Arians:—Suffer them not to pass by you unpoynted at; yea, if they will be so stowte as not to cease to speak against God our Saviour and Christ, refrayne not to spyt at such inordinate swyne, as are not ashamed to tred under* L 2 “ *their*



“ *their feet the precious godbed of our Saviour Jesus Christ.*”

Moses is not commended for slaying the Egyptian in the Scriptures; (Exodus ii. 11, 12.) which only relate the fact. But he would have been to be condemned for it, if he had done it through any other motive than that of preserving the life of an innocent, injured countryman. And it would have become him equally to have defended an Egyptian against the violent attack of one of his own country. But this could afford no countenance to Mr. Philpot, in his insulting usage of a fellow-christian, who did him no injury; and who, notwithstanding this declamation, and unscriptural language, *of the eternal and proper godbed, the precious godbed of Christ*, was so far from any injurious detracting thought of Christ, that he was now in prison, and ready to die for his sake and for his truth, and probably soon after suffered for it.

*Christ* is still the same that the Scriptures make him to us, from whence alone we can draw any knowledge of him, nor can suffer any real degradation, whatever be men's thoughts of him. And they who diligently

ly search and consult those sacred oracles, to find out what they deliver concerning him, do him all the honour they can; and should they thus be led to think his original dignity less than it really is, he will not find fault, or deem himself injured by them. For his great mind is infinitely above the pride, and low conceit, to which we are all so prone; nor is he disposed at all to regard how exactly men think of him, and to esteem and prefer them on that account, but for the honesty and purity of their intentions and endeavours in following those holy commandments which he delivered to them from God. And at the final consummation of all things, when he is to be invested with power to judge the world, these mistaken men, and passionate condemners of their brethren, will learn and reflect with concern, that their *zeal* (Rom. x. 2.) *was not according to knowledge*; and that the worst error of all others that his true and sincere followers could have fallen into, was to hate and destroy their fellow-christians, equally pious and virtuous as themselves, for not thinking of him their common Saviour

precisely as they did, and seeing his person and character exactly in the same light with them.

To finish this long article, but which however long, I trust may have it's use :

The ground upon which this protestant martyr, Philpot, should have defended himself against the Papists, and have endeavoured to confute the Arians with whom he had a controversy, should not have been, by obstinately maintaining that (*n*) *he only* had the truth, he only had Scripture on his side; and that those who did not agree with him ought to be kept down and punished in this world, and would certainly be everlastingly condemned in the next. But he should have insisted, that the Papists had no right to call him to account for his religious opinions, much less to persecute and murder him

(*n*) In his *Eleventh Examination* (See Fox's Acts, &c.) he said before his popish judges; " Except the articles of the Trinity, you are corrupt in all other things, and found in nothing." This was because on this point, their opinion happened to tally with his own.

In his *Thirteenth Examination*, he maintains that he was right, and the Papists and all heretics wrong, *by the spirit of God, which he had, and they had not; and by the word of God, which he knew to be on his side, and against them.*



him for them, so long as he committed no offence against the civil laws of the community, nor did any thing worthy of death. And he should have allowed, that the Arians, as he calls them, or any other christians, if there were any, whose opinions were still more opposite to his own, were not only to be secured from infamy or persecution on that account, but exempted from all censure or blame. And at the same time that he condemned the dictatorial intolerant spirit of the one, and strove to bring over others to what he believed to be the truth, he should have cheerfully granted and declared, that these and all other christians, however dissenting in opinion from himself, if alike sincere, would be equally with himself entitled to and enjoy the everlasting favour of God, as manifested and made known by Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER III.

*Of the worship of Jesus Christ, by Socinus, and his followers.*

**I**T was a circumstance much to be regretted at the time of the Reformation in Europe, that those men who saw through the thick darkness, which then covered the whole christian world, and who boldly and openly asserted the *Divine Unity*, did nevertheless retain the worship of Jesus Christ in their churches.

Whether they were biaſſed to this by the habit of offering up prayer to Christ, to which they had been inured from their infancy, under the papacy ; and perhaps at the same time were wrought upon insensibly by a fear of giving too great (a) offence in receding

(a) In a letter to a Synod of Unitarian brethren, Socinus exhorts them, by all means, to be mindful to offer prayers to Christ in their churches ; lest they should be reckoned to have a contemptuous opinion of him, and be ranked with those, who not only renounced the doctrine of the Trinity, but the worship of Christ, at the same time.

Socin. Op. Vol. I. p. 491.

ceding too far at once from the established worship: both which would incline them to imagine they saw foundation in the Scriptures for the invocation of Christ, when really there was none, as what we have been long accustomed to and much favour, we are apt to take up with and acquiesce in, upon very slight grounds:—From whatever cause it arose, so it was, that the Unitarian christians at this period, and especially those among them, who becoming the followers of Faustus Socinus, were denominated Socinians, distinguished themselves by pleading with an immoderate zeal, that Jesus Christ was to be worshiped by prayer being made to him, although they did not look upon him as having had any existence before he was born of his mother Mary.

There were those however among them who disapproved and rejected (*b*) such worship, as being without any foundation in the holy Scriptures, the only rule of a christian's faith and worship.

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(*b*) Mosheim, Vol. IV. p. 199. Ed. 8vo.



## SECTION I.

*Of the controversy betwixt Francis Davides  
and Faustus Socinus, concerning the wor-  
ship of Jesus Christ.*

THE Unitarians obtained a settlement very early in Transylvania, and have continued there under very various reverses (c) and much opposition to the present day. But in the year 1578, Francis Davides, an Hungarian, the Superintendent of their churches, or principal minister, a most learned man, of admirable sense, as the small remains of his writings shew, and of a life irreproachable, began openly to controvert the received doctrine of praying to Christ,  
in

(c) Id. p. 190. *Clausenburg*, otherwise *Coloswar*, is a town in Transylvania, extremely populous and well fortified. The Socinians have here (viz. in 1755) a public school, and a printing house; and their community in this place is very numerous. 'Till the year 1603, they were in possession of the cathedral; which was then taken from them and given to the Jesuits, whose college and church they had pulled down. p. 200.

in which he was supported by other (*d*) ministers of the gospel among them.

A principal person of his congregation at the time was George Blandrata, an eminent physician, of Piedmont, one of those Unitarians that rose up in Italy at the very beginning of the Reformation. He had fled from the Inquisition at Pavia, and taken refuge in Geneva, where he had thoughts of establishing himself. But he soon gave offence there, especially to Calvin, by calling in question the Divinity of Jesus Christ. And it becoming hazardous for him to stay in a place where Servetus had been burnt to death for opinions similar to his own but a few years before, viz. in 1553; he quitted it in 1558. He next retired to Poland, where at that time liberty of conscience was granted to the sects who had departed from the church of Rome. There he was well received

(*d*) Socinus, in the preface to his Disputation with Davides, mentions Jacobus Paleologus, Joannes Sommerus, Matthias Glirius, men of note, and others in Transylvania, who besides, or before Davides, were in these sentiments, which he calls *jewish* opinions concerning Christ. Socinus had spoken more truly and fully, if he had called them also *apostolical* opinions concerning Christ,

ceived by the *Reformed*, as the most prevailing sect was called; till Calvin's virulent letters found him out, and indisposed them to him. For he soon let him know, as Bayle remarks, that Divines of his high estimation, had long arms. At length, when he could no longer live quiet and unmolested among them, he was very happy in receiving an invitation to attend John Sigismond, prince of Transylvania, for the recovery of his health, in 1563; who became a profelyte to his opinions, and died in 1570. Blandrata acted as chief physician to him; and to Stephen and Christopher Battori, princes of Transylvania after Sigismond, who were not so favourable to the Unitarians; continuing to serve Stephen in the same capacity after he became king of Poland. He seems to have been much hurt by his high station; and became a sad example to christians, of the extreme danger of a love of the world, and of courting the favour of princes. For in the latter part of his life, he forsook (*e*) the interests

(*e*) Monendum lectorem censui, Blandratam haud paulo ante mortem suam, vivente adhuc Stephano rege Poloniæ,  
in



terests of the Unitarians, and took part with the Jesuits, who were in credit at court ; and came to an untimely end at last, being strangled in bed by his nephew, whom he had made his heir.

Blandrata had brought Fr. Davides along with him, when he went into Transylvania ; and by their joint labours they succeeded so far as to engage the prince and the greatest part of the nobility in their cause, and brought over almost the whole province to embrace

in illius gratiam, et quo illum erga se liberaliorem (ut fecit) redderet, plurimum remisisse de studio suo in ecclesiis nostris Transilvaniis, nostrisque hominibus juvandis : immo eo tandem devenisse, ut vix existimaretur priorem quam tantopere foverat, de Deo et Christo sententiam retinere : sed potius Jesuitis, qui in ea provincia tunc temporis ope ac liberalitate non mediocriter florebant, adherere, aut certe cum eis quodammodo colludere. Illud certissimum est, eum ab eo tempore quo liberalitatem quam ambiebat regis Stephani erga se est expertus, cepisse quosdam ex nostris hominibus quos charissimos prius habebat et suis opibus juvabat, spernere ac deferere etiam contra promissa et obligationem suam, et tandem illos penitus deseruisse, atque omni veræ ac sinceræ pietatis studio valedixisse, et solis pecuniis congerendis intentum fuisse. Quæ fortasse, justissimo Dei judicio, quod gravissimum exercere solet contra tales desertores, ei necem ab eo, quem suum hæredem fecerat, conciliarunt.

embrace their sentiments, obtaining for the ministers and members of their communion, the privilege of professing and preaching their doctrines in a public manner. This must have been much promoted by a public Disputation, which Blandrata and Davides maintained, with great success, before the court, against *quelques docteurs Reformez*, viz. some who followed Calvin's opinions, in 1566, as Bayle remarks. Blandrata, however, was much disturbed at the objections started by Davides, being very earnest that the worship of Jesus Christ should be maintained in their churches. And therefore, after exerting all his own endeavours in vain, by argument and intreaty to keep him in the received practice, he called in to his assistance the celebrated Faustus Socinus, who was then at Basil, in Switzerland; and with that view engaged Davides to take him under (f) his roof, to board

(f) Habitavi ego apud Franciscum, ejusque mensa sum. usus menses circiter quatuor cum dimidiato. Quod domi ipsius habitarem, et ipsius mensa uterer, id sane non gratis ab ipso habebam, immo charissimo pretio persolvi; quod tamen pretium mihi a D. Blandrata redditum postea fuit.

Hac

board with him; where he abode four months and a half; that they might debate the point between themselves at full leisure, Blandrata himself defraying the expences of his board and journey. For Davides was but in moderate circumstances, and Socinus, having left his country, and all its honours and fairest worldly prospects for the gospel's sake, was not rich.

It would have been happy, if Blandrata had suffered things to have gone on in their own train; and left the ministers to settle the point in question among themselves and with their respective congregations, without interfering himself any farther, or calling in the secular power, as was afterwards done. In which case it may well be conjectured, that the sentiment of Davides would have prevailed, and the worship of Christ, or of any other person, but the God and Father of all, would have been intirely excluded from their churches. For, after all, Socinus himself

Hac enim conditione Basilea me evocaverat, ut et itineris, et commorationis meæ in Transilvania, ipse omnes impensas ferret.

Fausti Socini epistola prefix. Disputat. quam habuit cum Fr. Davidis.



self tells us, (g) that he neither satisfied Blandrata, nor the Unitarians of Transylvania, nor his Polish brethren, that he stood upon solid ground in this controversy ; because he confessed, that *there was no express command in the Scriptures for the Invocation of Christ* : so that they would never consent to his printing his own account of it ; and he adds, that at the last it came out by the encouragement and at the expence of a particular friend. And moreover, while the dispute was depending, or soon after, in a  
private

(g) Cœpi vehementer cupere, et per literas D. Georgium Blandratam rogare, monere, atque adeo urgere, ut aliquid libro isti opponeretur. Sed nihil unquam efficere aut impetrare potui.—Cum igitur spem nullam esse cernerem, ut fratrum Transilvanorum opera libro isti ulla ex parte publice responderetur ; converti me tandem ad fratres Polonos, inter quos jam diu habitabam, illisque persuasi, recte futurum, si Jesu Christi invocatio ab impugnationibus Francisci Davidis defenderetur, idque edita mea Responsione ad illius pro suis Thesibus Defensionem. Verum, ubi in Responsione mea scriptum esse resciverunt, *nullum extare expressum in sacris literis præceptum de Christo invocando*, &c. ut ipsi hanc meam Responsionem edendam curarent, nunquam adduci potuerunt.—Itaque tandem sumptibus mihi ab homine pio et liberali benignissime supeditatis, integram meam cum Francisco Davidis de Christi invocatione Disputationem sub prælum dedi.

*Id. Ibid.*

private assembly of some of the ministers of Transylvania, there had been a general agreement in disapproving the custom of praying to Christ; and they had come to some resolutions against it, “*Christi invocationi plane adversantia*,” says Socinus.

It was laid to Davides’s charge, that he had violated his word, by taking a principal part in the resolutions of this assembly. As this accusation was brought against him after he was dead, and could not defend himself, we cannot determine how far, or whether he was at all blameable; only we find his friends vindicated him in it intirely. As to that which Socinus farther urges against him; viz. (*b*) that after having been cautioned not  
to

(*b*) “*Hicce D. Blandratæ literis acceptis, non destiti ego Franciscum monere, ut caute posthac se gereret, et ea, quæ in synodo ista decreta fuissent, ad Christi invocationem pertinentia, si fieri posset, rescindi curaret;—alioqui ipsi non leve periculum impendere, cum D. Blandrata, quem plurimum apud principem posse, omnes norant, ægerrime synodi decreta ista tulisset.—Sed sprevit similiter Franciscus denunciationem istam; immo pro eo, quod cautior saltem posthac in suo impio dogmate spargendo esse debu- erat, postridie ejus diei, cum dies dominicus esset, et de more in majore templo ad populum concionaretur, diserte (quod quidem et publica fama, et literarum monumentis*  
M testatum

to propagate his *impious* doctrine, (as he calls it, but surely in too dogmatical and imperious a way,) Davides, on the contrary notwithstanding, upon the very next day, being Sunday, preaching in the great church to the people, told them in so many words; that *there was as much foundation for praying to the virgin (i) Mary, and other dead Saints, as to Jesus Christ*: there seems to have been nothing justly reprehensible in this. Who had any just authority to restrain or limit him,

testatum esset) tantumdem esse affirmavit, Jesum Christum invocare, atque Mariam virginem et alios sanctos mortuos."

*Id. Ibid.* The reader will conclude, that Socinus could not be in a proper temper to debate the point, for which he was called into Transylvania, who beforehand held it *impiety* in Davides to assert that Christ, whom he believed to be a human being, was not to be invoked in prayer; but, God only.

(i) Others have made the same remark. The following declaration of an excellent person is full to the point. "I  
 " acknowledge that a very high degree of respect and veneration is due to the character of *Jesus*, as the anointed  
 " prophet of the most High, far excelling in dignity and power every prophet that preceded him. I honour him  
 " as the *Son of God*, in what appears to me the Scripture  
 " acceptance of that term; as the common Lord of  
 " christians; as the appointed judge of the living and the  
 " dead. But at the same time I am convinced, that the  
 " distance between him and Deity is INFINITE; that  
 " prayer



him, in the instructions which he was to deliver from the Scriptures, to the congregation? It might have been his 'duty, and so esteemed by him, to bear his testimony in this public way, to so important a doctrine, as that which related to the true and only object of divine worship. At the last however, when Davides could not be prevailed upon to try to procure a repeal of those resolutions, made by himself and the other ministers, which condemned the worship of Christ; nor would promise to conceal or suppress his sentiments: (which was much to his honour, as it was very assuming in Socinus and Blandrata to put him upon it;) the civil power interposed, most probably at the instigation of the latter, and three days after Davides had preached the above discourse, the Senate of Clausenburg had orders from the prince, (k) to

“ prayer to him is no where commanded in the Scriptures; and, consequently, that *the addresses of christians may with the same propriety be directed to the virgin Mary, as to the Person of our Lord.*”

*A short state of the Reasons for a late Resignation, &c. p. 5. by John Jebb, M. A. 1775.*

(k) “Tertio post die, accepit Senatus Claudopolitanus priores principis literas; quibus jubebat, Franciscum a

to remove him from his office of public Teacher, and put him in prison.

DIFFERENCES concerning matters purely religious would never have raised disturbances, or done any harm, any more than the disputes among the philosophers about their peculiar dogmas, if the magistrate had never taken any other notice of them, than to keep the peace among the contending parties, when either of them presumed to lift up the hand of violence against the other. The consequence here was, that a most learned, worthy man, and eminent teacher of divine truth, lost his liberty and life, and the world the benefit of his useful talents, as he soon after died in prison; and, what was still a more fatal evil (*1*), many others were

munere publice populum docendi removeri, et sub custodia asservari.”

*Id. Ibid.*

(*1*) In the beginning of the Preface to the Dispute betwixt him and Davides, printed at the distance of fifteen years after the death of the latter, one is grieved to find Socinus, remarking with some kind of insult; “Jam vero, de Francisci Davidis causa, judicio peracto, quamvis ejus affectu

were constrained through worldly terrors, to dissemble their real persuasion, and go contrary to the sense of their own minds. And thus liberty of conscience, and free inquiry in this momentous point, were no more suffered in that country.

I have sought much to obtain some information concerning this excellent person, and sufferer for the truth of Christ, Francis Davides : who in that early day bore such a constant and well supported testimony to the One only true God and Father of all, and  
to

affec<sup>t</sup>æ fere omnes, sententiam de Christo non invocando se abjicere palam professi fuissent; tamen cognitum est postea, id non ex animo ab ipsis factum fuisse”—i. e. “ And  
“ now, since the sentence and condemnation pronounced  
“ in the case of Davides, although almost all his retainers  
“ openly professed that they renounced their opinion of  
“ not praying to Christ, yet it was known afterwards,  
“ that *they did not do it from the heart.*” How unfeeling are persecutors ! where men weakly suppose the favour of heaven confined to the holding of certain opinions, which they have espoused, and think their honour or interest concerned in maintaining. How blind was Socinus to the fatal consequences of the iniquitous severities, of which he had been in some measure the author, or the accomplice at least ; in forcing men to dissemble and act a dishonest part : which he ought rather have wept over, and condemned himself for, instead of speaking so lightly of it !



to the worship of HIM only; but have been able to glean very little. What I have met with has been in Beza's correspondence, where he is brought in merely to traduce his character. The candid reader however will not be the less inclined to esteem him for what is there brought against him.

This man, Beza, of great learning and unquestionable abilities, but of a most bitter spirit, pursued his master Calvin's plan, in reviling and persecuting all christians who dissented from him, in certain points of doctrine, the *Trinity*, *Predestination*, and the like.

In a long letter, dated Geneva, August, 1567, designed, as appears from the contents, for Transylvania and Poland in particular; but entitled, *To all christian and orthodox churches in our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal coessential Son of the eternal Father*; he makes it his business to heap together various stories and calumnies against the opposers of the doctrine of the Trinity, from the apostles time down to his own. Many of his aspersions of his contemporaries were known to be absolute falsehoods; particularly,

ly, that Paul Alciat, (*m*) one of the Italian Unitarians, became at last a Mahometan: which will not dispose us to give much credit to his reports of others, that lived in remoter periods.

At a time when these Unitarians were the object of the common hatred and persecution of all other christians every where, and were actually laid in wait for and pursued like so many noxious animals, which it was meritorious to seize and destroy; (*n*) Beza makes  
no

(*m*) Ruarus, in one of his letters, mentions Alciat's spending the latter part of his days, at Dantzick, the place where he himself then was, upon the authority of persons who had known him well; and from the same testimony, informs us, that he made a very pious end suitable to his past life. *Ruari Epist. Centur. prim. p. 226.*

(*n*) Beza wrote a letter in the same calumniating strain, against the Unitarians, to Andreas Dudithius, one of the first and most accomplished characters of the age; who had been sent to the Council of Trent by the Emperor Maximilian II. and was highly valued by that excellent prince. As Dudithius favoured the Unitarians, but had not yet taken part with them, Beza's aim was to prejudice him against them, and incline him towards the *Reformed*. Ochsinus was one of those Italian Unitarians, who had been obliged to fly his country for the gospel, and had met with great misfortunes. To this Geneva Divine's false crimi-

no scruple of representing each trouble and calamity that befell them, nay even their very

nations and barbarous insult over him, Dudithius thus replies; “ Cum Ochini larva luctaris; pœnas etiam ab uxore divinitus sumptas affirmas, quasi e cœlo, atque ex Dei senatu delapsus, hoc nobis illinc nuncium adfers. Vobis hoc in more positum esse video, ut simul atque aliquis paulo miserabiliore morte obeat, statim hoc justo Dei judicio factum esse clametis. Non est humanum mortuis insultare, neque a mortis genere de pietate judicium ferri debet. Alioqui quid Josiam, et alios fuisse dicetis? Quid de Christo et Apostolis, atque infinitis martyribus, qui omnes ignominiosa et horrenda morte extincti sunt, sentietis? Quid denique de vestro Zwinglio respondetis! Præclarus ille verbi Dei præco, Christi scilicet discipulus, magistri nimirum et apostolorum exemplo, in prima acie cæsus esse dicitur! Quod genus mortis, neque christiano doctore dignum, neque non miserabile tamen fuit. Quare desine ita cum vulgo sentire, ut statim impium fuisse censeas, si quis non levi ac placida morte moriatur.” Cracoviæ Calend. Augusti. 1570. Socini Op. Vol. I. p. 521. that is; “ *You only fight with Ochinus’s ghost; (He had been dead six years) and talk as if you were just come down from heaven, and from the councils of God, when you tell us with authority that his wife was taken off by the divine vengeance. (N. B. She died many years before her husband, by an accidental fall.) I observe this to be the way of all your party, that no sooner does any one of different sentiments meet with a more calamitous death than ordinary, but you immediately cry out, that it happens by the just judgment of God upon him. It is an inhuman*



very poverty, as a judgment of almighty God upon them for their opinions concerning the Trinity, and, Divinity of Christ.(o)

“ To one he imputes it as a token of the  
“ anger of heaven against him, that he died  
“ of the plague, all men shunning him; and  
“ that he hardly found one to bury him:  
“ To another, that he drowned himself in  
“ a well;

“ inhuman part to insult the dead, and very wrong to measure  
“ and decide upon men’s characters by the kind of death which  
“ they die. According to your rule, what sort of persons must  
“ we reckon Josiah, and others like him, to have been? Nay,  
“ what must we think of Christ and his apostles, and of an in-  
“ finite number of martyrs, who were put to the most cruel  
“ and ignominious deaths? Or, lastly, what shall we answer  
“ for your own Zwinglius, that famous preacher of the word  
“ of God and disciple of Christ? Was it after the example of  
“ his great Master and the apostles, that he was slain in war  
“ in the front of the battle? A miserable way this surely of  
“ going out of the world, and unbecoming a christian teacher.  
“ Leave off then this trite and vulgar custom of judging and  
“ concluding every one to be a bad man, who does not pass  
“ gently and calmly out of life.”

(o) “ Gribaldus, peste correptus, fugientibus illum omnibus, vix a quo sepeliretur, invenit. Lismaninus, a quo introductus fuit Blandrata, seipsum in puteum abjecit. — Illum Franciscum Davidis, qui non ita pridem in Transilvania, Christo postridie maledicturus erat, quid ab extremo corporis et animæ exitio, ruente repente domo, præter longam Dei μακροθυμίαν, eripuit?

Beza Epistol. Theologic. p. 338.

“ a well;” which if it were true, is nothing more than the best of mankind are liable to sometimes, through depression of the animal spirits, or a sudden fit of insanity. Had he composed this letter to the Polish churches some years later, the manner of Francis Davides’s death in a prison would have been a subject for him to have dilated upon. But not being able at the time, to find out any other event of this person’s life, that might bear such a dark colouring, he makes “ his having narrowly escaped being  
 “ killed by the fall of a house, to be a mark  
 “ of heaven’s vengeance pursuing him to the  
 “ utter destruction of soul and body, and  
 “ nearly overtaking him :” from which he concludes that “ nothing but the long-suffering of God saved him at that hour.” One of a less hostile disposition, would have construed the deliverance into a token of a watchful and kind providence. And this Beza would not have failed doing, in the case of himself, or of those he calls orthodox ; i. e. of his own religious persuasion. But no kindness from God or man, was to be shewn to those of a different opinion.

IN the same letter, Beza acquaints us, that Blandrata first met with Fr. Davides in Transylvania; which must have happened in some journey that he made thither soon after he first went to Poland: and that this physician was converted by him from one sort of blasphemy to another much worse, as he is pleased to term it; that is, from having been of the *Arian* sentiment concerning Christ, he became persuaded of his *proper humanity*.

He then refers to some printed propositions ascribed to Fr. Davides; “ which I dare  
 “ maintain and averr, says Beza, contain the  
 “ seeds of every heresy, with which Satan  
 “ hath at any time opposed the gospel of  
 “ Christ. But (proceeds he) what he afterwards so impudently vomited forth, in pronouncing the (*p*) following persons, without any reserve, not to be heretics, but  
 “ teachers

(*p*) “ Certe in illis quas initio scripsit thesibus, quæ illi tribuuntur, ausim dicere et profiteri, omnium hæreseôn, quibus unquam Christi personam Satan oppugnavit, semina contineri. Quæ vero postea evomuit adeo impudenter; ut aperte et sine ambagibus, non pro hæreticis sed pro veritatis assertoribus, Origenem, Eutychem, Nestorium, Samosatenum, Arium, Donatum, Helvidium, Nepotem; Eunomium,



“ teachers of truth ; namely Origen, Euty-  
 “ ches, Nestorius, Eunomius, Praxeas, Pho-  
 “ tinus, Cerdo, Sabellius, Acephalus : these  
 “ and the like assertions which he makes,  
 “ were all that was wanting to place Sa-  
 “ tan himself in the throne of God and of  
 “ truth.”

We may presume that Davides had com-  
 mended these persons in general, as they  
 well deserved, on account of their honest and  
 bold defence of what they believed to be the  
 truth of God, against prevailing error ; not  
 that he approved all their peculiar and differ-  
 ing opinions, which was impossible : and  
 few persons of any candor, who are acquaint-  
 ed with the pages of ecclesiastical history,  
 and the small remains of some of these  
 early christians, will refuse them this just  
 praise.

Beza finishes his letter, with bidding the  
 princes of Transylvania (*q*) *not to cherish una-*  
*wares*

Eunomium, Praxeam, Photinum, Cerdonem, Sabellium,  
 habeat et nominet ; hæc, inquam ejusmodi sunt, ut unum  
 hoc superesse jam videatur, ut Satanam ipsum in Dei et  
 veritatis folio collocet.” *Id. Ibid. p. 333.*

(*q*) “Tuum autem est imprimis, augustissime rex fortissi-  
 mæ Polonorum gentis, in eo quod tam feliciter cœpisti,  
 con-

*coares a monster in their bosom, meaning probably Blandrata; and commends the king of Poland for what he had already done against the Unitarians: exhorting him not to endure any one in his dominions, who should calumniate the Son of God, by transforming him into a creature, or by restraining the name and unity of God, to the Father only; and then lastly, addressing them all together, admonishes them so to reverence the Son, as not to suffer any to inhabit their respective countries, who should dare to rob him of his deity.*

Was any one, at this day, like this forward impetuous Divine, to take upon him  
to

constantissime pergere, neque pati ut qui Filio Dei maledicit, (quis autem apertius ei maledicit, quam qui sive unum sive verum Dei nomen ad solum Patrem restringunt, vel illum in creaturam transformant?) regnum tibi a Filio Dei commissum, ejusmodi blasphemiiis, reddat iræ Dei omnipotentis obnoxium. Tuum quoque est, serenissime Transilvaniæ rex, quem pene in sinu imprudens foveas, circumspicere, &c.—Vos autem illustres et generosi Domini, quos Dominus ille dominorum vera sui cognitione in utroque illo regno dignatus est, osculamini Filium, nec committite, ut qui sua illum Deitate spoliant, apud eos consistant, quos in primis oportet ipsius gloriæ ac dignitatis vindices et assertores se præbere.”

Id. Ibid. p. 338, 339.

to address that great and wise prince, the present emperor of Germany, recommending similar violent measures to be used against his subjects, the Unitarians of Transylvania, Hungary, and other parts of his dominions ; he would surely order the meddling man to mind his own affairs, and not to busy himself with regulating the opinions, and dictating to the consciences of other men.

I reckon it a great misfortune to Socinus, to have been called out upon this occasion purposely, as a champion, to defend the particular doctrine of the worship of Jesus Christ ; and that he was employed to convert one, who, by himself, and his employers, was already prejudged to be in error. For he came, *non tam discere, (r) quam docere, not as an inquirer after truth, but to dictate to others* ; as Davides well reminded him towards the end of the dispute. This made him enter into it, with such conceit and presumption of the rightness of his own opinions, and contempt of his opponent as maintaining an *impious* doctrine, that he was not to be moved



moved by the force of any arguments brought by Davides; but litigated the plainest points, and evaded them by a variety of distinctions and refinements; in which he was most fertile. It indeed hindered him from seeing the truth ever after. For very rarely is there found candour enough in the human breast, for a man to recede from opinions, for the defence of which he has drawn his pen, and been highly applauded, however strong and demonstrative be the evidence to the contrary that is presented to him.

Both the disputants agreed in this, which they equally believed to be the doctrine of the Scriptures; that is, that Jesus Christ was a human creature, who had no existence till he was born into this world, according to the current computation, 1578 years before.

But Socinus withal had taken up an opinion, “ that in condescension (s) to human  
“ weak-

(s) “ *Ingens autem Dei benignitas erga humanum genus ea fuit, quod Christo homini, duci ac principi eorum hominum, qui ad immortalem vitam ab ipso Deo vocantur, et ea mala experto, quæ sequentibus eum experiri necesse est, tantam dederit potestatem, ut ad eum, tanquam*

“ weakness, in order that mankind might  
 “ have one of their own brethren, more  
 “ upon a level with them, to whom they  
 “ might have recourse in their straits and  
 “ necessities, Almighty God, for his emi-  
 “ nent virtues, had conferred upon Jesus  
 “ the Son of Mary, some years after he was  
 “ born, a high divine power, lordship and  
 “ dominion, *for the government of the chris-*  
 “ *tian world only*; and had qualified him to  
 “ hear and to answer the prayers of his fol-  
 “ lowers, in such matters as related to the  
 “ cause of the gospel.” The chief founda-  
 tion, on which Socinus erected this new  
 object of religious worship, Jesus Christ,  
 whom he acknowledged to have had no being  
 before he was born in Judea; and for which,  
 he constantly and fairly acknowledged, that  
 there was no express precept, was; the de-  
 clarations in the Scriptures concerning the  
 kingdom and power bestowed upon Christ;  
 the interpretation which he put on those  
 passages

quam ab ipso ordinatum, confidenter in iis, quæ ad eam  
 vitam consequendam spectant, confugere possint. Nos  
 vero, aliquot annis, postquam ex Maria natus est, eam  
 potestatem Christo ex libera et voluntaria Dei benignitate  
 concessam fuisse dicimus.”

Id. Ibid. p. 715. 737.

passages which speak of angels and heavenly powers being put under him and worshipping him; his having a knowledge of the secret thoughts of men imparted to him, and the like; which, with some *presumed* instances of the fact, of prayer being actually made to him; he maintained to be a sufficient, though indirect signification of the divine will, that men should invoke Christ in prayer.

To this reasoning Davides replied in general; that in each of his particular instances Socinus mistook the sense of the sacred writings: and moreover, granting that such a perpetual power and government over christians had been intrusted to Christ, which there was not, it would by no means follow that on that account their prayers ought to be addressed to him. For to constitute him an object of prayer, there needed an express command of Almighty God. But no authority of this kind was pretended, nor indeed can be produced.

IT will gratify some readers, and not be beside our purpose, to give a few instances of Socinus's skill and dexterity in parrying

N

off



off his opponent's arguments against the worship of Christ: though it often required all the acuteness he was master of, to do it with any appearance of plausibility.

When, in his prayer, a little before his death, for himself, his apostles and followers to the end of time; Jesus said; (Joh. xvii. 11.) *(t) Holy Father, keep in thy name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are*: Davides argued from it; that by this language, Christ plainly signified, that *he himself* was not the person whom his followers were to supplicate for preservation and support, but God, *the father*; whom in the entrance of his prayer, he styles *the only true God*. And to the most ordinary, unprejudiced understanding, this would appear as clear an indication of the mind of Christ on this head of religious worship, *namely*, who was the person whom his disciples were to supplicate for protection; as it was an undeniable demonstration

(t) “ Not, as in our present English version, *keep through thine own name*: but, *keep in thy name*, as in ver. 12. i. e. preserve them in the true worship of Thee, and in the doctrine of the gospel, which I have manifested unto men, ver. 6.”

Bishop Pearce *in loc.*

stration of his own practice. But the turn which Socinus gives to it is this : “ *Christ, says he, (u) at this time, recommended his disciples to the Father only, and intimated nothing concerning his own protection of them, because he had not yet received his power and dominion from God, which was to enable him to inspect and govern them, after his removal out of this world. And although he knew at the time, that he was to be invested with such a power, it was proper for him, before it really took place, to utter such a prayer, that it might thence be known, that he received it from the bounty of God, and that he himself acknowledged it to be so, &c.*”

There might have been some colour for this ingenious evasion, if Christ, by himself, or his apostles, had at any other time  
directed

(u) “ *Christus autem propterea suos, hinc discessurus, patri commendavit, quia munus et potestatem, eos, licet absens, gubernandi, nondum adeptus fuerat. Quod quamvis, ut alibi apparet, ipse futurum sciret; decebat tamen eum, antequam id reipsa fieret, precantem ita loqui; ut ea ratione, et id deinde sibi ex Patris largitate datum agnosceretur, ipseque se idem agnoscere profiteretur, &c.*”

Id. Ibid. p. 727.

directed men to pray to him. But when there is nothing of this kind enjoined in his life time, or after his resurrection, and being taken up to heaven, in respect of his being an object of prayer to his followers; his own address and supplication to the heavenly Father, to preserve them when he was departed from them, is a sure guide to us as it was to them, that it is God, our heavenly Father, only, to whom we are to offer up prayer, in the hour of distress.

(w) “ THAT maxim stands firm, and  
 “ will for ever stand, says Davides; that  
 “ there is extant a strict divine command,  
 “ that no one is to be invoked in prayer,  
 “ but God, the Father, the Creator of  
 “ heaven and earth: (referring to Matth.  
 “ iv. 10. Luke iv. 8. before cited by him.)  
 “ And

(w) “ Firmiter persistit, et persistet axioma illud; severum extare mandatum Dei, neminem extra Deum, patrem, creatorem cœli et terræ, invocandum esse: ipso Christo quoque veritatis magistro docente; *Vos, cum oraveritis, dicite, Pater noster, &c.* Huic enim contrarium mandatum nullibi extat de invocando Christo; nisi fortasse alibi alia extent Biblia mihi hætenus incognita.”

Id. Ibid. p. 740.



“ And Christ, the great Master of truth,  
 “ himself, also teaches; Matth. vi. 9.  
 “ *When ye pray, say, OUR FATHER, &c.*  
 “ *For there is no contrary command given, of*  
 “ *praying to Christ, unless there be some other*  
 “ *Bible which I have not yet seen.*”

In his strictures on the first part of this assertion of Davides, Socinus refers to something, elsewhere remarked by him, not very solid, on that prohibition, Matth. iv. 10. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*; viz. that it relates to *adoration* only, not to *invocation in prayer*. But he replies, acutely enough, to the quotation brought from Matthew vi. 9. that Christ is not there teaching *who was the object* of prayer, but *in what manner* the Father was to be worshiped in prayer. “ *Nevertheless,* says he, *I (x) confess, from the whole of*  
*this*

(x) “ Fateor tamen, ex universo apud Matthæum Christi sermone, atque ex re ipsa satis constare, ad solum Deum patrem, illo tempore et antea, in Dei populo preces dirigi consuevisse. Sed quid mirum, cum Christus nondum vel extitisset, vel glorificatus esset, qui solus inter res creatas hoc a Deo obtinuit, ut ad ipsum quoque, licet corpore absentem, preces nostræ dirigi possint?”

Id. Ibid. p. 740.

*this sermon of Christ in Matthew, and from the thing itself, that at that time, and before, prayer was wont to be directed by the people of God, to the Father only. But what is there in this to be marvelled at; when at such times, either Christ had not a being, or was not yet glorified, by having this peculiar honour above all other creatures of God bestowed upon him, that is, of being invoked in prayer, when absent and invisible."*

But Socinus should have considered, that since, by his own avowal, at the time when Christ delivered this sermon upon the mount, there was no other object of prayer that had ever been acknowledged by the people of God, but Jehovah, the heavenly Father of all; and Christ directed prayer to be made to the Father, without dropping the least intimation that there was any other person to be prayed unto: if *he himself* really, nevertheless, was one day to be worshiped by prayer, he most assuredly would have been careful to have marked it particularly afterwards; and would have given some express and explicit directions concerning it, which could not be mistaken. But

as he never did this, the conclusion is unavoidable, that Christ was the farthest possible from proposing himself as an object of divine worship and prayer; and that therefore no such worship is to be paid to him. And although Socinus adds, that there is no need of a divine command for invocation of Christ in prayer, when there is nothing in the Scriptures to the contrary, which either expressly or tacitly excludes him from being the object of worship: Yet, in this view of the subject, every direction of the sacred writers or of Christ, to pray to Jehovah, the Father; every instance of holy men or of Christ's own praying to the Father, was a direct exclusion of Christ himself from being the object of prayer and worship.

IN another part, Socinus is thus strongly pressed by his adversary: (y) “ When Christ  
“ was

(y) “ *Franciscus Davides.* Dixit cum in terris verfaretur Christus, (Joh. xv. 15.) Vos autem dixi amicos, quia omnia quæcunque audiavi a Patre meo, nota feci vobis. Si hæc patris voluntas fuisset, ut ipse in Christo adoraretur,



“ was conversant upon earth, he said to his  
 “ apostles, (Joh. xv. 15.) *I have called you*  
 “ *friends; because all things that I have*  
 “ *heard of my Father, I have made known*  
 “ *unto you.* If then it had been the will of  
 “ the Father, (continues Davides) that *He*  
 “ should be worshiped in Christ, or Christ  
 “ in him, i. e. *that Christ should in any sort*  
 “ *be prayed unto and worshiped; he, their*  
 “ *divine Master,* would certainly have signi-  
 “ fied it to his disciples: *because he made*  
 “ *known unto them all things which he had*  
 “ *heard*

aut Christus in ipso, certe id discipulis significâset; omnia enim illis significavit quæ a patre suo audivit: certum autem est, quod hoc a patre suo non audivit. Doctrina igitur ista, ut non ex Deo patre, et Christo sit oportet. Si fortasse, ut contendimus, asseveraverimus, postquam in cœlos ascendit, omnem accepit potestatem, super omnia exaltatus est, hanc consecutus est dignitatem, ut adoretur et invocetur, — nequaquam consistere potest. Nam post suam in cœlum ascensionem, misit discipulis spiritum sanctum, per quem omnia illis annunciavit. Sed hic nec alia, nec prioribus contraria, docuit. Nam de patre accepit, et illum glorificavit; non docendo, in Christo Deum patrem præcipue adorari, aut Christum adorandum et invocandum esse, verum in doctrina per Christum tradita confirmavit. Et sic nos quoque discipulos suos futuros esse dixit, et patrem suum celestem glorificaturos, si sermonem illius servaverimus; non si Deum patrem in Christo adoraverimus, aut Christum in Deo patre.”

“ *heard of his Father.* But since he never  
 “ did this ; it is certain he never heard it  
 “ of the Father. The doctrine therefore  
 “ of worshiping Christ, is neither from  
 “ God, nor from Christ. If, because we  
 “ allow, that after he ascended into heaven,  
 “ all power (Matth. xxviii. 18.) was given  
 “ to him, and he was exalted, above all  
 “ things, it be hence maintained and  
 “ concluded, that the honour of being  
 “ to be worshiped and invoked in prayer,  
 “ was also then conferred upon him ; this  
 “ cannot with any truth be asserted. For  
 “ after his ascension into heaven, he sent  
 “ to his disciples the holy spirit, by whom  
 “ he told them all things. But the spirit  
 “ taught them nothing more in this respect  
 “ than they had learnt before. For he re-  
 “ ceived of the Father, and glorified him ;  
 “ not by teaching, that the Father was  
 “ chiefly to be worshiped in Christ, or that  
 “ Christ in any sort was to be worshiped  
 “ and invoked in prayer : but only con-  
 “ firmed them in the doctrine that Christ  
 “ had delivered to them. And so also Christ  
 “ has instructed us, that we shall become  
 “ his true disciples, and glorify his hea-  
 “ venly Father, *if we keep his words* ; not,  
 “ if

“ if we worship the Father in Christ, or  
 “ Christ in God the Father.”

(z) Socinus replies ; “ that he had already  
 “ spoken to these objections : but that  
 “ he would now add, that Davides did not  
 “ sufficiently attend, that Christ, who had  
 “ said that he had *made known unto his dis-*  
 “ *ciples all things that he had heard of the*  
 “ *Father* ; did afterwards tell them, (John  
 “ xvi.

(z) “ *Faustus Socinus.* Quoniam per ea quæ modo  
 diximus, satis ad ea omnia quæ hoc loco dicis, responsum  
 est ; illud tamen addemus, te non animadvertisse eundem  
 Christum, qui dixerit discipulis suis, omnia quæ audi-  
 visset a patre, nota se illis fecisse, eisdem postea dixisse,  
 multa se habere quæ illis diceret, quæ nondum portare  
 possent. Inter quæ, si Dei per ipsum, et in ipso adoratio  
 et invocatio, a nobis numeraretur, quid quæso absurdi in  
 ea re contineretur, cum hæc summam illam potestatem,  
 et ecclesiæ gubernationem in Christo, licet corpore absente,  
 ipsiusque paterni solii participationem omnino requirant,  
 quam, ante spiritum illum veritatis acceptum, Christi  
 discipuli nec intelligebant aut suspicabantur, nec intelli-  
 gere aut suspicari poterant ? Christum autem, et in Christo  
 Deum adorari et invocari posse, postquam spiritum illum,  
 qui eis facilia portatu redditurus erat omnia, acceperant,  
 Christi discipulos intellexisse, vel id satis declarat, quod  
 primus ipsorum, qui sanguine suo veritati divinæ testi-  
 monium dedit, Christum ea in re invocavit, in qua ipse  
 Christus Deum patrem invocaverat.”

Id. Ibid. p. 747.



“ xvi. 12.) *I have yet many things to say*  
 “ *unto you ; but ye cannot bear them now.*  
 “ And what *absurdity*, proceeds he, is there  
 “ in *supposing*, that this doctrine of wor-  
 “ shiping God by Christ and in Christ,  
 “ and of invoking Christ in prayer, was one  
 “ of the things his apostles could not then  
 “ bear ; as they had no suspicion of that  
 “ immense power, and government of the  
 “ church, when invisible and removed in  
 “ body from them, and the partaking of  
 “ his Father’s throne, to which he was to  
 “ be advanced : which would authorize in-  
 “ vocation of him in prayer, when he came  
 “ to be possessed of them. But when they  
 “ had received the promised holy spirit,  
 “ which was to make all things easy to be  
 “ borne by them, they were then under no  
 “ difficulty in comprehending, that Christ,  
 “ and God in Christ, were to be worshiped  
 “ and invoked in prayer ; which appears by  
 “ the first martyr for divine truth, recom-  
 “ mending his spirit (Acts vii. 59.) to  
 “ Christ, in the same manner as Christ,  
 “ when he expired, (Luke xxiii. 46.) re-  
 “ commended himself to God the Father.”

*Remark.*

*Remark.* There would indeed have been no *absurdity* in *supposing*, as Socinus puts it, that the worship of Christ and invocation of him in prayer, was one of those things which he did not mention to his apostles in his life-time, because they would not have been able to bear it; if his apostles afterwards, when they had received the gifts of the holy spirit, had ever informed us, that it was a new additional precept to what their Master Christ had given them whilst living with them upon earth, that *He* was to be a person, that was to be worshiped and addressed in their prayers, together with God, the Father of all, to whom alone they had been wont to offer prayer. But when the apostles are themselves intirely silent in this respect, and their sentiments are presumed and guessed at from dubious expressions; or from such a single *imperfect* example, may we not well call it, as that of the holy man Stephen, calling upon Christ when going out of the world, whom he had just before seen in a vision, and when the impression of what he had seen might well be supposed to be present to his mind: for these and other reasons,  
 this

this argument of Socinus, though ingenious, is by no means satisfactory.

BUT although Socinus thus warmly contended for addressing prayer to Jesus Christ, he acknowledged that there was no divine command for it, and therefore not any absolute necessity of doing it: which was the circumstance in his dispute with Davides that disobliged his friends, Blandrata (*a*) in particular, so that they were always against its being made public. The ground of his making and adhering to this distinction and restriction upon this point, was this. If he had maintained that it was absolutely necessary to pray to Christ, which it would have been on the supposition of an express divine command for it, there (*b*) would then have been

(*a*) Prefixed to the Dispute between Socinus and Davides, are Blandrata's objections to the manner, in which Socinus had handled it.

Socin. Op. Vol. II. p. 716.

(*b*) " Si præceptum est datum, ut Christum invocemus, quandocunque ejus rei occasio se obtulerit; id facere omnino debemus. Omnia enim præcepta affirmantia semper obligant, cum se rei præceptæ occasio offert. Occasio Christi



been no reason why we ought not *always* to pray to Christ: and this he saw would interfere with, and tend to supersede and exclude the worship of the only true God, the Father.

Socinus therefore asserted, and frequently recurred to it, that it was right and fit that christians should pray to Christ, though they were not by any absolute command bound to do it; and he complains much of his adversary accusing him falsely of saying, (c) *that we must and ought* to pray to Christ, whereas he maintained only that we *might*, and that it was proper to do it.

When the difficulty of knowing when to pray to Christ, or what things *to ask of him*  
in

Christi invocandi est sine dubio, cum quis in aliqua necessitate est constitutus, quæ divina ope indigeat, et multo magis cum quis jam reipsa invocare vult. Ergo si præceptum est ut Christum invocemus, nunquam, cum in aliqua necessitate sumus quæ divina ope indigeat, et multo minus cum jam reipsa invocare volumus, omittere possumus quin Christum invocemus. Sed hoc manifeste falsum est. Ergo falsum est extare præceptum de Christ invocando."

Id. Ibid. p. 478.

(c) "Jam probatum est, Christum invocari posse, id quod ego contendo; non autem, ut tu hic et ubique fere mihi affingis, invocandum esse."

Id. Ibid. p. 756.

*in particular*, was urged to him, if there was no command to specify any thing concerning it, nor any absolute necessity for it. He replied, (*d*) “ that there might happen  
 “ such circumstances, in which there would  
 “ be a *relative necessity* of doing it, and  
 “ christians would be guilty of a great sin  
 “ in neglecting it. When, for instance,  
 “ they happened to be in a congregation  
 “ where prayer was offered to Christ: or,  
 “ when at any time they felt an impulse  
 “ upon their own minds, to pray to him.  
 “ Although in the same place, he allows, (*e*)  
 “ that

(*d*) “ Quod si in hac disputatione cum Francisco Davidis non semel affirmamus, nos non teneri invocare Christum, sed tantum jure omnino posse; id non ita intelligendum est, quasi nunquam necesse sit ut Christum invocemus, nunquamve evenire posset ut peccemus, si Christum non invocaverimus. Hoc enim evenire posse, prorsus statui-  
 mus; veluti, si in cætu in quo præsentem sumus, Christus publice invocetur; ut non raro fieri contingit. Vel si spiritus nobis suggesserit, ut id faciamus. Verba enim nostra de absoluta tantum, non autem de qualibet necessitate, accipienda sunt.” Id. Ibid. p. 712.

(*e*) “ Dico igitur non esse absolute necesse, ut quis ad Christum ne semel quidem preces suas dirigat; id est, fieri posse, ut quis preces suas nunquam ad ipsum Christum direxerit, et tamen nec ideo peccaverit, et nihilominus salutem

“ that it might also so fall out, that a christian might never all his life pray to Christ, without forfeiting thereby his salvation.”

And with respect to discriminating what things to ask of Christ, and what of God, how to divide the duty of prayer betwixt both, (which seems an insuperable difficulty with those that hold Christ to be an object of prayer; whether they look upon him as a man, or the first of created Beings, or another supreme God, equal to the Father and some way or other one with him) Socinus had contrived this ready answer; (*f*) “ that of God, may be asked all kind of good things relating to any person whatsoever; but of Christ, only those things which in any way belong to his universal church, and

*salutem per eundem Christum consequatur: quippe cui nunquam contigerit ullam ex iis causis habere, quas supra attingi, omnino preces suas ad Christum dirigendi.”*

*Id. Ibid. p. 479.*

(*f*) “ A Deo omnia cujuscunque generis bona, et ad quemcunque pertinentia, peti possunt: a Christo vero ea tantum, quæ ad ipsius universam ecclesiam, et ejus singulas partes, singulaque membra quodammodo pertinere queant. Quandoquidem horum tantum largiendorum potestatem a Deo Christus adeptus est.”

*Id. Ibid. p. 764.*



“ and its several parts, and each particular  
 “ member of it. For that Christ had  
 “ granted to him from God the distribution  
 “ of these things only, and of no others.”

But whilst Socinus thus boldly presumes and undertakes to draw the line of prayer, with respect to God and Christ, of his own fancy, and without any authority whatsoever, in which no one can safely trust him : it remains, and will remain for ever unresolved, upon his or any other plan ; *why apply at all to Christ in prayer, for any thing, when you have no divine command for it, and when you may, and are encouraged to pray to Almighty God, for every thing ?*

## SECTION II.

*Of Socinus's behaviour towards other Unitarians, who refused, and opposed the worship of Jesus Christ.*

**T**HUS with all his ingenuity and refinements, Socinus had but a very unsatisfactory account to give of the obligations of praying to Christ. And yet like most others, who have been bent at all events to carry a disputed point, what was deficient in argument he failed not to make up in passion, and angry denunciations of the wrath of God against those who ventured to oppose his sentiments. In which, if he did not come up to our countryman Archdeacon Philpot above commented upon, or the Frenchman Beza, it was only because his nature was gentler, and his education more polished. And yet from what I am going to relate, some will think he fell little short of either of them.

SOCINUS

SOCINUS is far from appearing in an amiable light, in his answer to a friend, that had blamed him for his harsh invectives against *Paleologus*, who had written against the worship and invocation of Christ. The reason he alleges for his having called *Paleologus* a Jew, and persisting in it, shews to what pitiful arguments and excuses a learned man will have recourse, who is resolved never to own himself in the wrong. For he maintains, that he ought not to be accused of reviling *Paleologus* by using such language, (g) *because in the opinion of almost all the true churches of Christ, he was manifestly reckoned to judaize.* But what if *all* the churches of Christ, and *all* the members of them, without exception, had charged him with judaizing, in worshiping God, the Father only, and not Christ, or in any other peculiar opinions entertained and propagated by him? This would have been only more to his honour, whilst he

(g) “ Quod vero Paleologum aliqua in re Judæorum similem appello, idque simul verum esse demonstro, non video cur ob id maledicentiæ accusari possim, præsertim cum jam omnibus fere veris Christi ecclesiis, eum plane judaizare aperte constet.”

Socini Op. Vol. I. p. 365.



he had the testimony of Christ and his apostles in his favour; by which the truth of the gospel doctrine is to be proved, and not by the number of voices on this side or that side.

He is still more censureable in the same place, for calling Paleologus, (*b*) *a man quite blinded with hatred to Christ's glory*. How could Socinus know another man's heart, or take upon him to point out the inward motives by which he was actuated? He might entertain as real an esteem and honour for Christ, as himself, though he durst not, without an express divine command, rank him so far on an equality with God, as to worship him. If Paleologus had replied to him, and been equally disposed to railing, he might have accused Socinus of being infatuated with a blind zeal for his undue exaltation of him whom he acknowledged to be a human creature lately born, Jesus the Son of Mary; and putting him upon a level with the most high God,

(*b*) "At enim alibi eum Christi gloriæ odio excæcatum esse dicis. Quid tum? Si non modo id verissimum esse ex compluribus aliis manifestum est, verum, etiam locus ipse id omnino requirebat, &c."

God, in worshipping him together with God, and praying to him.

(i) “ I do not believe, continues Socinus  
 “ soon after the above, that any one can  
 “ read Paleologus’s book, without owning,  
 “ that he could hardly have been answered  
 “ in any other way, or that a milder treat-  
 “ ment than this could with any propriety  
 “ have been given to him. And I am per-  
 “ suaded, that they would be the more of  
 “ this opinion, if they were as well ac-  
 “ quainted

(i) “ Nec fane quenquam futurum puto, qui modo Paleologi librum legerit, quin fateatur vix aliter quam ego feci (quod ad hanc partem attinet) ei responderi potuisse, aut mitius aliquanto cumeo agi debuisse. Quid si cognitum haberet, ut quidem ego habeo, quot malorum causa, non isthinc tantum in Transilvania, sed in Ungaria quoque, in Lithuania, et aliis in locis Paleologi auctoritas et scripta fuerint? An non ipse primus omnium in provincia ista, sententiam illam maxime impiam et detestandam de non adorando neque invocando Christo, una cum aliis pluribus pestilentissimis erroribus, docuit et scriptum reliquit? Nonne ejus doctrina hodie, quæ quibusdam Francisci Davidis doctrina esse creditur, integræ æque non paucae ecclesiæ in Ungaria scdissime sunt corruptæ? Nonne is in Lithuania, alterum quendam Franciscum Davidis, quantum in se fuit, jam excitavit, et provinciæ illius ecclesias suo veneno infecit, ab ipsiusque Poloniæ ecclesiis jam fere divulgavit ac separavit?”

Id. Ibid. p. 365.

“ quainted as I am, with the mischiefs  
 “ which his writings have occasioned, and  
 “ the great vogue they have had, not only  
 “ there in Transylvania, but in Hungary  
 “ also, and in Lithuania, and in other pla-  
 “ ces. *Did not he, the first of all others in*  
 “ *that province (Transylvania) teach and*  
 “ *publish in print, that most impious and de-*  
 “ *testable opinion of his, that Christ was not*  
 “ *to be worshiped and invoked by prayer, to-*  
 “ *gether with very many other most pesti-*  
 “ *lential errors? Is it not with that doctrine*  
 “ *of his, which is by some thought to be*  
 “ *Davides’s own, that not a few churches*  
 “ *in Hungary have been intirely and most*  
 “ *shockingly corrupted. Has not he, as*  
 “ *far as lay in his power, excited another*  
 “ *Davides in Lithuania, who has infected*  
 “ *those churches with his poison, and caus-*  
 “ *ed a schism, and separation from the Po-*  
 “ *lish churches?”*

The charge of causing mischief and dis-  
 turbances has been the common cry and  
 cant of intolerant bigots in all ages, against  
 such as would not conform to their dictates.  
 Our Saviour’s apostles were stiled by their  
 Jewish adversaries, (Acts xvii. 6.) *men that*  
*turned*



*turned the world upside down.* What harm was there in the churches of Lithuania or Transylvania differing from those of Poland, by rejecting the worship of Christ, whilst each of them honestly followed their convictions, and embraced what they believed to be the truth? Or what necessity was there for them all to hold exactly the same opinion in this respect, any farther than that Socinus might give the lead, and all men bow to his decisions? If he termed the sentiment of Paleologus, that Christ was not to be worshiped by prayer, impious and detestable; there were others, not a few, who would startle at his maintaining with so much vehemence, that a human creature, who was born but yesterday as it were, at Bethlehem in Judea, should be made a God, to whom worship and prayer should be offered.

BUT Socinus discovered a far worse spirit, in his treatment of Paleologus, after he was dead. The little I have been able to gather of the history of this remarkable man, from Moreri and others, and of his unfortunate end, is this. He was a Greek christian

of the isle of Chio, and one of many others who took refuge in Italy, after the Turks had become masters of Constantinople. He had been shut up in the prisons of the Inquisition at Rome for the freedom of his religious opinions, but had escaped thence in 1559. After this he fled into Germany, where, as also in Poland, Transylvania, and other parts, he zealously propagated his peculiar sentiments, and supported them by his publications, being a strict Unitarian, denying any other God but Jehovah, the Father and Maker of all things; or that worship and prayer was to be offered up to Christ, in any way, or on any account whatsoever: which last was what gave such great offence to Socinus. The Bishops of Rome used all possible endeavours for many years to get him back into their power again, and at last succeeded in procuring him to be arrested in Moravia, by means of the Emperor, and sent to Rome.

There again, in the hands of the Inquisition, we are told, that he at first boldly asserted the truth of the doctrines he had taught: but being condemned, and on the point of being executed, he recanted, and  
promised

promised to confute his former publications ; which he accordingly is said to have done, on being remanded back to prison ; and there died.

I would here observe, that huddled up as every thing is within those dark walls, we have nothing certain to say farther of Paleologus, but that he ended his days in horrid confinement, in the year 1585. We may however form a probable conjecture, that he never wrote expressly against his former sentiments : for if so, we can have little doubt but his work would have been made public. And if it be true, that after having been for a while firm and unshaken, he at last gave way and retracted his former sentiments, through the insupportable terrors of the rack and of being burnt alive ; let those blame who think they can stand the fiery trial unmoved : we need not however to fear, but that he will find all compassionate allowance with the Father of mercies, for this single act of human frailty, and surely ought to have experienced the same from his fellow-creatures ; far from deserving that unfeeling, unchristian barbarity, with which Socinus pursues his memory, and insults over what  
he



he took to be his final ruin ; as is seen in what follows.

Vujekus, a Jesuit, of Poland, in his book, in the Polish language, *on the Divinity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit*, had commended Paleologus, for being reconciled, before he died, to the Church of Rome. Socinus in his Answer to Vujekus replies, “ (k) that such a conversion was no  
 “ favour of God towards Paleologus, but a  
 “ just punishment of his impiety. For  
 “ (proceeds he) he was one, and if I am  
 “ not mistaken, the chief standard-bearer  
 “ among

(k) “ At de Paleologo, quem similiter ex nostro numero fuisse sine dubio arbitrantur, jam respondeo ; nullo pacto Dei beneficium erga ipsum istud fuisse, quod ecclesiæ romanæ reconciliatus fuerit, sed debitam ipsius impietati pœnam. Nam præterquam quod nostros homines simplicissimos licet atque innocentissimos edito adversus eos libro, cum interim tamen eos fratres appellare illum non puderet, tanquam pessimos nebulones traducere non est veritus ; unus etiam atque adeo, ni fallor, præcipuus fuit ex antesignanis illorum, qui Christum nec adorandum nec invocandum esse hodie affirmant, et interim tamen se christianos esse impudenter profitentur, quo vix quidquam scelestius in religione nostra depravanda, excogitari posse existimo. Merito igitur talis homo talem finem est sortitus ; ut cum sui nominis perpetua ignominia, et quod multo pejus est, animæ

“ among those, *who at this day affirm, that*  
 “ *Christ is not to be adored and invoked in*  
 “ *prayer, and yet in the mean while have the*  
 “ *effrontery to call themselves christians;*  
 “ than which nothing I think can be de-  
 “ vised, more profligate, or more debasing  
 “ to our religion. Deservedly therefore  
 “ did such a man come to such an end;  
 “ that, together with the perpetual infamy  
 “ of it, and what is much worse, the ever-  
 “ lasting destruction of his soul, he should  
 “ be again united to and become a member  
 “ of that Great Whore, with whom the  
 “ kings of the earth have committed for-  
 “ nication, from whose tyranny he had  
 “ formerly by the favour of God separated  
 “ himself, and been more than once deli-  
 “ vered: not prevailed upon by any good au-  
 “ thority or argument, but merely through  
 “ the dread of present punishment, to re-  
 “ turn

animæ eterna jactura, illi magnæ meretrici, cum qua  
 scortati sunt reges terræ, a qua per Dei gratiam olim se  
 sejunxerat, et ab ejus tyrannide non semel liberatus fuerat,  
 non quidem testimoniis aut rationibus ullis permotus, sed  
 præsentis supplicii terrore compulsus, denuo sese adjunx-  
 erit; cujus imperio ac jussu miser postmodum cruenta  
 morte finem senilibus suis annis invenit.”

“ turn to her again, from whose hands the  
 “ wretched man at last met with a most  
 “ cruel death in his extreme old age.”

Poor vain mortals, *sick of a little brief authority*, will presume to deal out the divine judgments against their fellow-creatures, who submit not to their dictates, however different and contrary the doctrines on which they take upon them to make their final salvation to depend. We have a little before seen an Athanasian Divine, himself at the time in circumstances that one should naturally suppose would have subdued and softened all pride and passion, and displeasure at others, (p. 89.) pronouncing without remorse the sentence of the divine condemnation, upon an innocent woman, then lately put to death, and on another person with whom he was disputing; for denying the Trinity, and the Divinity of Jesus Christ. Here we have Socinus, who denied both these points, excluding a man agreeing in sentiment therein with him, from heaven's mercy, without any crime to allege, or accusation to bring against him, but his maintaining, from the authority of Scripture, contrary to what Socinus thought, that  
 Christ



Christ was not to be worshiped, or invoked in prayer. Both Philpot and Socinus had forgotten that benevolent lesson of their common Lord and Master ; (John xiii. 35.)

*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another ;* and hurried by their blind zeal and passion, too nearly approached the temper of the most inveterate enemies of the gospel, of whom the holy Jesus warns his disciples in the same conversation with them ;——(xvi. 2.) *the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God service.*

TOWARDS the conclusion of his treatise against Paleologus, Socinus suffers himself to be drawn into some very disrespectful language concerning Christ and his apostles. Of this I shall take some notice, as the bad example has of late years been too much followed, where one would hardly have expected it ; and it will naturally lead to other matter, belonging to our subject. I shall give the whole passage, as it shews his too confident temper, and how far he was from that modesty, which became a man who  
was

was asserting a very disputable at least, and, in the opinion of many, a very wrong point.

“ I maintain, therefore, (says Socinus to  
 “ Paleologus,) that this your opinion is on  
 “ this account most impious, or as I said be-  
 “ fore, most injurious (1) to God and to his  
 “ Christ, because it destroys the most ex-  
 “ cellent workmanship of God, in which  
 “ his supreme goodness and beneficence to  
 “ the human race shines forth; and de-  
 “ prives

(1) “ Dico igitur, ideo maxime impiam tuam istam sententiam esse, sive ut ante locutus sum, in Deum Christumque ejus maxime injuriosam, quod et Dei opus præstantissimum, in quo suprema ejus erga humanum genus bonitas ac beneficentia elucet, plane tollit; et Christo honorem et gloriam, quæ ut præcipua sic propria ejus est, adimit. Nam in quo (obsecro) tantam erga homines benignitatem ac liberalitatem ostendit Deus, quantam in eo, quod homini illi Jesu Nazareno, qui Christus dicitur,——tantam potestatem dedit, &c. Quid porro ipsi Christo vel convenientius vel honorificentius, quam, in cœlis manentem, ecclesiam suam quæ in terris degit, regere et gubernare, ab ipsaque jugiter et adorari debere, et in suis necessitatibus confidenter invocari posse?——Sic enim cum ab ipso, tum ab ejus apostolis edocti sumus. *Quamobrem et ipse, et illi insignes impostores et falsarii fuerunt, si id verum non est; et idcirco nulla prorsus eorum dictis fides adhiberi nec potest, nec debet.*”

“ prives Christ of his chief and peculiar  
 “ honour and glory. For wherein, I pray,  
 “ could the benignity and philanthropy of  
 “ God be equally manifested, as in consti-  
 “ tuting the man Jesus of Nazareth, the  
 “ Christ, a leader and guide to other men in  
 “ the road to virtue and immortality ; and  
 “ in bestowing upon him power to assist  
 “ and protect them in this mortal life from  
 “ the snares of Satan and of the world ?  
 “ And moreover, what so becoming and  
 “ honourable to Christ, as to reside in hea-  
 “ ven, and from thence to rule and govern  
 “ his church upon earth, and to be conti-  
 “ nually worshiped by christians, and with  
 “ confidence addressed and invoked by them  
 “ in their necessities ? All which comes to  
 “ nothing, if Christ does not at present in  
 “ person administer the affairs of the chris-  
 “ tian world, but is passive in that respect.”

N. B. *This might be all very well, were  
 there any foundation for it. The point is not,  
 what Socinus might conceive to be worthy of  
 God ; and honourable to Christ, in his being  
 appointed to hear the prayers of his followers,  
 and to help them : but, whether God has  
 thought proper to give him such a power and  
 authority.*



*authority.* He then goes on to assert, “ that  
 “ it is included in the very term and name,  
 “ *the Christ*, which God has given to this  
 “ Jesus of Nazareth, that he should thus  
 “ be our king, to rule over us and to help  
 “ us; and that this is the very doctrine of  
 “ Christ himself, and of his apostles.” *But*  
*he forgets that some better proof of it is*  
*wanting, than his own warm and positive as-*  
*sertion.* It then follows; “ *Therefore Christ*  
 “ *and his apostles must have been most re-*  
 “ *markable impostors and falsifiers, if this*  
 “ *be not so: (i. e. if Christ be not the ob-*  
 “ *ject of the christians worship and prayer)*  
 “ *and no credit can or ought to be given to*  
 “ *any thing they say.*”

Such vehement asseverations, and unworthy insinuations concerning our Lord and his apostles, betray a mind too much heated with prejudice and self-opinion, to inquire with a proper temper after truth. It is difficult to assign what could be the motive, which could induce a serious christian, to make use of expressions, which, in the remotest degree, bring the moral character of Christ and his apostles in question. Socinus argues afterwards, “ that christians would  
 “ want

“ want the necessary aids and support to  
 “ keep them steady and virtuous in this  
 “ dangerous world of trial, if they had  
 “ not one, who had been a man like them-  
 “ selves, to apply to in prayer, for help  
 “ and assistance.” But this remark and as-  
 sertion was obviously nothing but the effect  
 of custom and pure prejudice, in Socinus.  
 Believing himself to have derived the greatest  
 advantages from the use of prayer to Christ,  
 in carrying him safe and innocent through  
 various difficulties in the course of his life,  
 he grew thence by degrees, to imagine that  
 it was a thing no less necessary for all chris-  
 tians. So, many pious Roman Catholics  
 have believed themselves to have reaped great  
 spiritual benefit from praying to the Virgin  
 Mary, and have been persuaded that those  
 who neglected it, deprived themselves of a  
 principal means to make them holy and vir-  
 tuous. But none are to be governed by the  
 fancies and authority of others, but by  
 what the Scriptures prescribe, concerning  
 the Object of Prayer. And these uniformly  
 direct and lead us to make our supplications  
 to the merciful Creator and heavenly Father,

as one who careth for us, and who alone heareth, and can help us.

NOT long ago, I was led to mention, in what manner a (*M*) worthy person still living, suffered himself to be drawn into a strain of very depreciating expressions concerning Christ and his apostles, similar to what Socinus here uses.

But, as if the example was infectious, Bishop *Newton* since, has still more, if possible, transgressed all rules of decency in this respect; in his Works, published within the present year, 1782, and nearly, if not intirely printed off under his own inspection. As the Writer is in some measure a party concerned, having innocently given occasion to the use of such intemperate language; and also falls under no small part of the intended blame, if there be any belonging to those, who do not believe the doctrines for which the Bishop pleads so vehemently; I shall make some animadversions upon the whole

(*M*) See A Sequel to the Apology for resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, p. 418.



whole of the short tract in question, as well as this exceptionable part. And as I have made so free with Socinus, I hope I shall not be thought to violate the ashes of the dead, in what I offer here. The disquisition will be found to make a proper part of my design, which is, among other things, to shew, how much the general stream of authority and of writers of note in the times we live in, opposes free inquiry into the Scriptures; especially in what relates to God and the proper object of worship, and the true character of Christ.

### S E C T I O N III.

*Of the late Bishop of Bristol's method of arguing against Socinians or Unitarians.*

WHAT I propose to make some comment upon, is in the Bishop's fifth Charge to his clergy of the diocese of Bristol, for the years 1776 and 1777; in both which years, we may presume, it was delivered. The title is; *A Dissuasive against Schism*. Soon after the beginning, he remarks; vol. ii. p. 703, &c.

*Bp. Newton.* “ Others there are who have a better plea for their separation, if their principles were true. These are they who deny the divinity of our blessed Saviour, admit him indeed to be a teacher sent with an extraordinary commission from God, but will not allow him to be more than man, or to have had any existence prior to his being born of the virgin Mary, and consequently profess to reverence and obey him as their prophet, to apply to him as their mediator, but not to worship and adore him as their God. Now the doctrine and practice of the church of England being contrary to theirs, they can no longer join in communion with her, but renounce her liturgy and articles, resign their livings, and publish apologies for so doing.”

*Remark.* This is a fair state of things, to which the Writer subscribes; save only that if *by applying to Christ as mediator*, be understood the addressing him as *bearing prayer*, or having any knowledge of it, he finds no countenance for any such supposal in the Scriptures (*a*).

*Bp.*

(*a*) *Resign their livings, and publish apologies for so doing*  
When the person, to whom the Bishop points, published  
what

*Bp. Newton.* “ If their principles, I say, were true; if their premises were right, their conclusion also would be right, and we should be really, what they are pleased to call us, *idolaters*. But they have no better reason for their denying the divinity of our Saviour and the doctrine of the Trinity, than because they cannot comprehend them; and if they are to reject every thing in religion which they cannot comprehend, there will be scarce any article of faith remaining.”

*Remark.* They have given their reasons for rejecting the divinity of Christ, and the

P 3

doctrine

what he called his *Apology* on resigning his benefice, in using that term, he did not intend an excuse for what he had done, which was nothing more than what he believed to be right and his duty. But he gave it the title of an *Apology*, as being a narrative of the reasons inducing him to quit his preferment and connection with the church of England, which he thought some would be glad to know. And this meaning of the word was not unusual. So we understand Πλατωνος, Απολογία Σωκρατους, *Socrates's Apology*, given us by his scholar *Plato*, as an explanation of the motives upon which he had conducted himself, and what had raised him the enemies who had brought him to the situation he was in; not as an excuse for the part he had acted. So also we understand “ The *Apology of Algernon Sydney* on the day of his death.”



doctrine of the Trinity, very different from what are here ascribed to them; namely, that after the most laborious research, they cannot find any such doctrines in the holy Scriptures; and particularly, that it is the supreme Father and Creator of all things, and *not himself*, whom Christ invariably speaks of, as being *his Father* and *his God*, and as *the only true God*.

But in representing those persons who thus dissent from him, as calling himself and others *idolaters*, for their worship of Christ and the Holy Spirit together with the Father; the Bishop betrays a temper of mind of too great affinity with what we have seen in Mr. Philpot and Socinus, in drawing and urging consequences from the opinions of those he is writing against, which they themselves are far from drawing.

For although they say, that with *their* sentiments, and under a full conviction, that neither Jesus Christ, nor the Holy Spirit, are either of them the most high God, or objects of divine worship and prayer, *they should be self-condemned in praying to either of them, and guilty of idolatry*, so far as a violation of the divine command given to  
Moses

Moses may be so called; viz. (Exodus xx. 3.) *Thou shalt have no other gods before ME*; i. e. Thou shalt not give that worship to any other person, which thou givest to me: And do also farther own, that at times their minds have been formerly disturbed and nearly overwhelmed with self-condemning apprehensions at being concerned in carrying on and joining in worship so utterly disapproved by them, before they could accomplish their purpose, of emancipating themselves intirely from it; yet, however they should judge of themselves in the case, they never permit themselves to call the worshipers of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, *idolaters*. Or if ever they have in any sort seemed to do it, they retract and reject such a censure, and condemn themselves for it. For we cannot know what connections and associations of ideas are formed by others, nor the various ways in which they have been taught and accustomed to reconcile things to their own minds, which seem to us most repugnant. When therefore a person separates and withdraws himself from a particular church or society of christians, on account of their worship being such in which he

cannot conscientiously join, and should look upon himself as guilty of idolatry in so doing, he does not thereby condemn them, or call them *idolaters*. What he does amounts only to this; that he should be guilty and condemned himself by continuing to worship with them.

*Bp. Newton.* “ Their writings and *Apolo-  
gies* strike out no new lights, furnish no new matter, nor even one new argument to the purpose: they are only a dull repetition of stale objections, which have been refuted over and over again.”

*Remark.* If they only present neglected truths, and good old arguments in support of them, before their readers, they may not be wholly to be discommended: for it is often an useful and necessary service. But concerning this point the Bishop assuredly had a just right to judge for himself, and to declare his sentiments.

*Bp. Newton.* “ But it is not fitting, that such pestilential heresies should be suffered at any time to walk about without notice or reply. As fast as these Hydras revive and raise their heads, they should be knocked down again; which in the present case hath  
been



been done most effectually, and to general approbation, by a most ingenious layman and member of the Irish Parliament, (Mr. *now* Dr. *Burgh*) by the worthy President of Corpus Christi college, (the Rev. Dr. *Randolph*) and by a learned clergyman of my own diocese, Mr. *Bingham*, a name memorable for the knowlege of christian antiquities."

*Remark.* There can be no reply made to the language of the former part of this paragraph. All the notice that has been thought necessary to be taken of these publications so highly praised by the Bishop, by the Writer, is contained in the Preface to a "Sequel to the Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick." But he would refer the Reader to a valuable work, viz. "Letters to the Rev. F. Randolph, D. D. &c. by A. Temple, M. A. with an appendix, in which the tendency and merits of Dr. Burgh's Publications are particularly considered;" and also to "Remarks on Dr. Burgh's Scriptural Confutation, &c." by the same author.

WHAT the Bishop goes on to produce in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity, and  
of

of the worship of Three Divine Persons, each of them God ; and particularly on the worship of Christ, p. 706, 707, 708, has been considered in the *Apology and Sequel*, and in a “ Dissertation on praying to Christ.” I pass therefore to the part, where he endeavours to prove Christ to be the most high God ; and in which he gives way to such disrespectful and blameable expressions concerning both Christ and his apostles.

*Bp. Newton.* Vol. ii. p. 709. “ Christ in his godhead is equal to the Father, he is inferior only in his manhood. As man only he is not to be worshiped by us, he is to be worshiped as God.”

*Remark.* These general abstract terms, *manhood*, *godhead*, &c. which are the creatures of our own brains, and by which many impose upon themselves and others, as if they were something real ; do here refer to the fiction of *two natures* in Christ, one human, the other divine, by which he is made to be the most high God and a mortal man, at one and the same time. The supposed grounds for such a distinction, and what countenance and support it receives from the Scriptures, have been considered  
above,

above, in examining Dr. Doddridge's arguments in its behalf.

*Bp. Newton. " But if he be not God, nor consequently to be worshiped by us, what becomes of the truth of the christian religion ; or what can be said in vindication of Christ and his apostles for advancing so many falsities, and unavoidably leading us into such pernicious errors ? What apology or excuse can be made for such gross fraud and prevarication, as well as for such audacious effrontery and presumption, as their ascribing to him, and his arrogating to himself, the stile and title of godhead, when he was no more than a creature ?*

*Remark.* The apostles never ascribed to Christ, nor did he ever arrogate to himself the stile and title of godhead, or assume any authority but what was suitable to a creature, highly favoured of God ; so that the Bishop might well have spared this abusive language concerning Christ and his apostles, upon such a supposition. On any supposition it ought not to have been used. But it is civil speech, compared with what will soon follow.

*Bp.*



*Bp. Newton.* “ The Jews more than once charged Jesus with blasphemy, because (John v. 18.) he called God *πατέρα ἰδίου*, his own father, making himself equal with God; and because (x. 33.) he being a man made himself God: and indeed if he had been man only, the charge would have been unanswerable. But he was so far from admitting their argument, or retracting in the least what he had said, that in all his answers he rather confirmed and established his being equal with God, and his being God.”

*Remark.* In both these accusations which the Jews allege against Jesus, (John v. 18.) that *he made himself, not equal with, but, as the original should be translated, like to God;* and again (x. 33.) *we stone thee—for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God:* they did not mean to charge him with asserting himself to be the most high God. Whoever deliberately considers, in what connection these charges are brought against him; and particularly his answer to the last, concerning his being guilty of blasphemy in *making himself God, when he was confessedly but a man,* will find that our

Lord's

Lord's countrymen by no means intended to accuse him of affirming himself to be the very God whom they worshiped, or of taking upon himself to be a different creature from other men, but only *with assuming to himself the power and authority of God*; in other words, presuming, without sufficient grounds, to be the Messiah.

*Bp. Newton.* “According to St. Paul, (Philip. ii. 6, &c.) Christ's merits consisted in this, that *being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God*, i. e. he did not assume to be equal with God, but *made himself of no reputation, εαυτον εκενωσας*, emptied himself, divested himself of his former glory, and *took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men*; and for this reason *was highly exalted, and a name given him above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow*: but according to these men, the reverse of all this was the truth, and he was guilty of this robbery in arrogating an equality with God.”

*Remark.* Here again appear the evil effects of not correcting confessedly wrong translations of the sacred text. For the learned and

careless, whose prejudices such wrong translations favour, as well as the unlearned, who are most to be pitied, will still continue to use and be guided by them. Bishop *Newton* should have known, tho' Mr. *Philpot*, (See p. 104.) more than 200 years before, might be ignorant of it; that the original greek of Philip. ii. 6, &c. gives no ground for any such english expressions, as *robbery*, *being guilty of robbery*, in this case: an imputation, which he not very candidly supposes those he is arguing with to fix upon Christ. The very unwarrantable paraphrase of Bishop *Hurd* upon the passage is; " that Jesus  
 " Christ was in no haste to seize upon, and  
 " assert *his right of equality* with God." St. Paul's words, as shewn in an examination of that *paraphrase*, (o) convey no such ideas. He was better instructed in the Scriptures, than to make any other person, *God's equal*. Error is infinite. Behold the strange flight of imagination, which a truly pious writer indulges, on this mistaken interpretation and supposition

(o) " The Catechist; or an Inquiry into the doctrine  
 " of the Scriptures concerning the only true God, &c." p. 70. note.



fiction of Christ's *equality with God*. (p)  
 “ *Jesus thought it no robbery; it was his indisputable right, to be equal with the infinite, self-existent, immortal God. Yet, in mercy to sinners, He emptied himself of the incommunicable honours, and laid aside the robes of incomprehensible glory. When he entered upon his mediatorial state, instead of acting in the grand capacity of universal sovereign, he took upon him the form of a servant, &c.*”

Amidst these extolled popular writers, on the one hand, and learned men in high offices in the church, on the other, the generality of christians have little chance for coming at the knowledge of Christ's true character.

*Bp. Newton.* “ If he was nothing more than man, and had no being before he was born of the virgin Mary, how could he say (John viii. 58.) *Before Abraham was, I am; I am*, the name by which God made himself known unto the children of Israel.”

*Remark.*

(p) “ *Hervey's Contemplations on the starry Heavens.*”  
 p. 182. note.

*Remark.* It has been proved at large in another (N) place, that our Lord, in saying, *Before Abraham was, I am*; affirms nothing more to the Jews concerning himself, than that he was their divinely appointed prophet, *propheta designatus*, the Christ, the Messiah. As though he had said to them, in other words; “ You need not to be surprised at what I have asserted of the great account which our ancestor Abraham made of me: for I assure you, that before Abraham himself was born, *I am* he, i. e. I am the Christ, the Messiah.” For so the very same phrase is interpreted and supplied in verse 24 of this same chapter; and our Lord plainly refers to his having been destined for that great office and dignity before even Abraham had a being. According to the same hebrew phraseology, it is spoken of those who remained firm in the profession of the truth in corrupt times; Revel. xiii. 8. that *their names were written in the book of life of the lamb slain before the foundation of the world.* In agreement with which,

(N) A Sequel to the Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, p. 222, &c.

which; the Apostle Peter says of Christ; (1 Pet. i. 20.) that *he was verily foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times.* And so far is our Lord, in this place, from alluding to or assuming the name and character of Almighty God, exhibited in Exod. iii. 14. as if it belonged to him; and he was the self-existent God: that, as the learned know; the words written by Moses are not, *I am what I am,* but *I will be what I will be,* and therefore Christ could never refer to them here.

*Bp. Newton.* “ Or how could he mention his having been in glory before the world was ?”

*Remark.* The Bishop here, by trusting to his memory, misquotes, and thereby undesignedly misrepresents the words of Christ. For he *does not mention his having been in glory, before the world was.* But he says; (Joh. xvii. 5.) *And now, O Father, glorify Thou me, with thine ownself, with the glory, which I had with Thee, before the world was.*

And if we pay due attention to this our Lord's solemn prayer to Almighty God, comparing the several parts of it with each other, and having an eye also to his

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circumstances and situation at the time, to which his requests would be exactly suited ; we shall find, that he has no retrospect to any prior existence, which he had in another world, before he was born into this, nor asks for any dignity and felicity which he had formerly enjoyed, to be restored to him : But what he asks for, is something that he had never enjoyed before, to be bestowed on him in consequence of *having finished the work which God had given him to do*, and as the promised reward of it:—something that he had always had a respect unto, as being *destined* for him by Almighty God in his eternal counsels, and thereby as fully insured to him, as if he had been from all eternity in actual possession of it : So that he might on that account say, that he *had had it with the Father*, exactly in the same way of speaking, as a little afterwards in the same prayer, he says, *he had given*, [i. e. promised, engaged to bestow] this same thing to his disciples and followers, which he supplicated and sought for himself; ver. 22. *And the glory which Thou hast given me, I have given to them:—them*, that is, ver. 20. *to all those who should believe on him through*  
the

*the preaching of his apostles*; both to you and to me, christian reader, if we are Christ's true disciples. Now what is this something, this *glory*, which Christ so earnestly desired, at going out of the world, for himself, his apostles, and followers, for you and me, that we should be partakers of it with him? Why, it was to be instrumental in promoting the success of the gospel; to have the honour and glory, after him, of bringing the lost human race out of darkness, idolatry and ruinous vice, to virtue and to the attainment of eternal life. This will be found to have been the blessed Jesus's *glory*, which was his earnest desire and prayer at this time; which he so much longed for and aspired after; and I would add an infinitely nobler and more satisfying object, to a rational mind, than any personal honour, dignity, and exaltation, of which many would make Christ ambitious here, and to be soliciting it from Almighty God.

*Bp. Newton.* "If he was nothing more than man, how could he speak of himself (Joh. iii. 13.) as coming down from heaven, and being in heaven, even while he was upon earth?"

*Remark.* Our Lord, though he was nothing more than man, could thus speak of himself with truth and propriety, in the same way that he could say of his doctrine, *that it came down from heaven. viz. "My Father giveth you the true bread (Joh. vi. 32, 33.) from heaven. For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."* In the same sense also as he could say, that John's baptism *was from heaven*; Matth. xxi. 25. His own doctrine, and John's baptism, are both said by him to *come down* or to *be from heaven*, because they were both of divine authority. And in like manner, he here describes *himself, coming down from heaven*, because he had an extraordinary commission and authority from God. But I refer to what has been above delivered on this passage of Scripture, p. 60.

*Bp. Newton.* "Or how could he declare, (Joh. v. 23.) *that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father?*"

*Remark.* It immediately follows: *He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, which hath sent him.* And thus, taking



taking the whole passage together, we plainly see, that Christ speaks only of the honour that was to be paid him, as *sent by the Father*, as God's ambassador or messenger. And this honouring of Christ consisted in receiving and obeying his message, *not* in receiving him as the most high God, or in worshiping and praying to him, as to God himself. It is observable, that this is one of the principal texts insisted upon by Socinus, as justifying the worship and invocation of Christ.

*Bp. Newton.* “ If he was nothing more than man, how could he assume divine attributes to himself, (Rev. i. 17, 18.) *I am the first and the last, I am alive for evermore.* (ii. 23.) *I am he which searcheth the reins and the heart, and I will give to every one of you according to your works?*”

*Remark.* The whole of the first passage Rev. i. 17, 18. stands thus; *I am the first, and I am the last: I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore.* And if the Bishop had cited it all together, his reader would have seen, that the person who speaks, was not the most high God, *the first and the last*, in that sense; but

*a creature, a mortal creature* originally, who had been put to death, and restored to life again. But *GOD cannot die.*

To shew that, in the other passage, Rev. ii. 23. Christ does not ascribe omniscience to himself, but speaks only of such a degree of knowlege as was communicated to him by Almighty God at that time, and at that time only, may I refer to “ The Catechist, or Inquiry into the doctrine of the Scriptures concerning the Only True God, &c. p. 96.

*Bp. Newton.* “ Nothing could justify such language, but its being the voice of a God and not of a man. In any mere man it would be insufferable; and such a man so presumptuously affecting godhead, we could never with any reason believe to be a messenger of God, and a teacher of righteousness, but *must necessarily look upon him with abhorrence, as a gross impostor, or foul blasphemer, or downright madman at best.* It is *impossible* therefore for *any consistent Socinian* to be a *true christian.*”

*Remark.* It is happy for us, that whether we be *true christians*, or no, is not to be decided by each other's partial and prejudiced verdicts, but at a higher and more equitable tribunal.

tribunal. But whatever liberties men may think themselves allowed to take in censuring their fellow christians, it is wholly unaccountable how they can bring themselves to use such terms as these, concerning the blessed Jesus ; that he must be thus undervalued and set at nought, as a gross impostor, or foul blasphemer, or downright madman, if he be not what some men take him to be, and do not come up to all that their warm imaginations have figured to them concerning him.

There was a noted Divine of the church of England, at the close of the last century, who was also a violent declaimer, in his day, against Socinians and Socinianism. Mr. *Locke* fell under his displeasure for writing his “ *Reasonableness of Christianity* :” and in his attack upon him for it, this Mr. *Edwards* contrived to give such a turn to his words, as to charge him with *making our Saviour a coward*. To such an accusation, the sum of that great and good man’s answer, was ; (r) *that it is difficult to say how, consistently with any true piety, a man can entertain*  
so

(r) *Locke’s Works*, Vol. III. p. 248. 4to. Edition.



*so vile a thought, or use such a profane expression of the Saviour of the world.*

I would be far from saying, that *Socinus* or Bishop *Newton* were men void of *true piety*, as I believe they had a great deal; and it is a disposition of mind that is particularly discernible throughout all the writings of the former. But this may be said concerning them, from the license which they both gave themselves in aspersing the characters of Christ and his apostles, on the supposition that their words were not agreeable to their interpretation of them; that they were men of strong passions, unreasonably attached to their own conclusions, and impatient of contradiction about them; and perhaps (which is the best apology that can be made for them) weakly imagined that all revelation would fall to the ground and come to nothing, if their particular systems concerning it, were not to be embraced, and universally prevail.

*Bp. Newton*—thus concludes. “ If ever there were any, these are the men, who not *privily*, as the apostle speaks, (2 Peter ii. 1.) but *publicly*, bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, the

*atone-*

*atonement* made by Christ as well as *his divinity*. But this is not their only fault. *They have new modelled the Liturgy in accommodation to their own tenets*, and would willingly change the whole form of government; many of them being no less enemies to our civil than to our ecclesiastical constitution, Socinians in the one, Republicans in the other, and promoters of anarchy and confusion in both."

*Remark.* With what foundation of justice and truth, the Bishop applies the apostle's words; others will judge. But he is mistaken in imagining Christ to be *the Lord that bought them*, mentioned in this passage by the apostle. For he speaks not of Christ, but of God, the supreme Father of all, whose creating power and governing providence were denied by these persons so severely censured by him. For it is not the usual language of Scripture concerning Christ, that *he* bought or redeemed us; but of God: however commonly it has been ascribed to Christ. And the apostle most probably refers to certain christians, of whom we have well authenticated accounts, that soon after the death of the apostle John, they held the  
opinions

opinions here condemned, which may have begun to shew themselves a little before Peter died, when he wrote this epistle. “ For they opposed the divine authority of “ Moses and the prophets, and maintained “ that this world was not made by God, “ but by inferior agents, with the tacit “ consent of the supreme Being, and without his interposing to prevent them (*d*).”

The

(*d*) See Dr. Lardner’s History of Heretics; p. 78, 79. a posthumous work; but the most valuable account in our language, of the strange characters and doctrines, that sprung up, in that dark period of ecclesiastical history, which immediately succeeded the times of the apostles. The worthy author, after the truly learned and candid Beaufobre, of whose History of the Manicheans he makes great use; thus apologizes for the errors of these men: “ *Basilides* “ supposed this lower world to have been made by angels. “ This is an opinion, which many went into out of “ respect, though a false respect, for the Deity. They “ thought it below the supreme Being to meddle with “ matter, in order to give it form and beauty. They “ judged it to be unworthy of him to make perishing and “ mortal beings. Above all, they could not endure the “ supposition, that God was the author of the many evils “ that are in this world. If God had made this world, “ they argued it would have been perfect. But as there “ are in it many imperfections, it cannot be the work of “ God, infinitely perfect, infinitely good. They chose “ therefore to ascribe it to angels,” &c. *Id. Ibid.*



The Form of Public Prayer in use at the Chapel in Essex-Street, to which the Bishop next alludes, was mostly compiled from Dr. Clarke's Reformed Common Prayer Book. But, as some other alterations were admitted, which were however signified at the time to the public, the title would have been more just, if it had been called; (*E*) "The Book of Common Prayer Reformed, in which Dr. Clarke's Amendments have been chiefly followed." And this choice was made by the Preacher at the chapel, because, although in some things he differed in sentiment from that excellent person, yet the Amendments made by him, in respect of the great and sole object of worship, were such as he intirely approved, and believed to be the truth. For the Doctor has thrown out all those passages in the Liturgy of the church of England, in which prayer is addressed to Christ, or to the Holy Spirit, or any other, but the person of the one true God, and Father of all.

Con-

(*E*) The title now is; "The Book of Common Prayer reformed, according to the plan of the late Dr. Samuel Clarke, together with the Psalter or Psalms of David, and a collection of hymns for Public worship."

Concerning this Reformed Liturgy of Dr. Clarke, which has been in this manner adopted at the Chapel in Effex-Street, we have the following testimony of a late liberal and judicious Prelate, in its favour, in a private letter to a friend (*e*).

Extract of a Letter from Archbishop *Herring* to Dr. *Jortin*, Dated *Croydon*, Aug. 7, 1753.

“ I have seen Dr. Clarke’s Common Prayer Book. I have read it; have approved the temper, and wisdom of it. But into what times are we fallen after so much light, and so much appearance of moderation, that one can only wish for the success of truth? The world will not bear it.”

With respect to the charge of disaffection to the civil constitution of our country, which is brought against those who approve and attend this Reformed Worship, no one needs to be scandalized or disturbed at it; as it is but a slight sample of the treatment which the Bishop has given to a much larger body of good Englishmen, in the Memoirs of

of his own life, drawn up by himself, and prefixed to his works. From the view here exhibited of Bp. *Newton's* methods of controversy, I hope I shall not be thought uncandid or unjust, in applying to him, what is remarked by Archbishop Tillotson in one of his Sermons ; that “ *where reason is weak and blunt,*  
“ *passion must be whetted, the only weapon*  
“ *that is left, when reason fails. And I*  
“ *always take it for granted, that no man is*  
“ *ever angry with his adversary, but for*  
“ *want of a better argument to support his*  
“ *cause.*”

#### SECTION IV.

*Of Socinus's method of promoting the worship of Christ.*

WE return again to Socinus, to mention only one or two more circumstances relating to our subject and his conduct.

His unrelenting rigour in insisting on the worship of Christ, by those who considered him



him in no higher light than himself, as one of the human race, does no where more fully appear, than in his Epistle to the Synod of Wægrow. How long after he came to Poland it was written, does not appear, as it has no date. I shall give some extracts from it, with a remark or two.

*A Letter from Socinus to the Synod of Wægrow.*

(*m*) “ With respect to the immediate design of your Synod now assembled at Wægrow

(*m*) “ Cæterum, quod ad eas causas attinet, ob quas isthic Wægrovix in Dei Christique nomine convenistis, etsi ego vobis ulla de re admonendis parum sum aptus; tamen visum est mihi vos hortari, ut de adoratione et invocatione Christi in ecclesiis nostris conservanda, imprimis laboretis. Hac enim retenta, perfacile omnes judaici errores convelluntur; ea vero vel spreta vel abjecta, nulla ratione fieri potest, ne ubique judaismus vigeat, vel potius turpis epicureismus atque atheismus. Quemadmodum et pie et docte scripsit olim D. Gregorius Paulus frater noster ad Transilvanos, cum de causa Francisci Davidis agi cœptum est. Præpostere igitur omnino fit, si quis cum eo disputans, quem constat adorationem et invocationem Christo non tribuere, conetur illum ab aliis quibusdam judaicis erroribus retrahere, priusquam eum a tanta ignorantia et cæcitate liberet, quæ omnium ejusmodi errorum

tanquam

“ grow in the name of God and of Christ ;  
 “ although I do not think myself qualified  
 “ to advise you in any thing, I have thought  
 “ proper nevertheless to exhort you, to la-  
 “ bour and take care in the very first place,  
 “ that the adoration and invocation of Christ  
 “ may

tanquam certissimus ac perennis quidam fons est ac scaturigo. ————— Quod si qui sunt, qui nullo pacto adduci queunt, ut Christi hoc tempore regni sui administrationem et divinam potestatem agnoscant, non est cum illis amplius (ut mihi quidem videtur) in rebus sacris commercium habendum. At vero ne alii in posterum in eandem impietatem facile delabantur; non abs re inter alia quæ fieri possent fore existimarem, si omnibus verbi Dei ministris injungeretur, ut in publicis precibus, statutis saltem quibusdam diebus, Christum Jesum Dei filium nominatim invocarent. Quamvis enim rectissime, jam inde ab ipso initio in Christi ecclesia, sive usu receptum, sive lege constitutum fuerit, ut ad ipsum Deum preces dirigantur, quo illi prærogativa sua perpetuo conservetur; tamen ex historiciis simul manifestum est, Christum quoque, statim post patefactam ejus gloriam ac potentiam, publice ab iis qui ejus nomen profiterentur, invocari consuevisse. Quod si unquam temporum et personarum ratio tulit ut id fieret, nunc maxime inter nos fert, cum et nos tanquam Jesu Christi contemptores pessime apud alios christiani nominis homines audiamus; et eorum, qui Christi nomen profitentes ipsum tamen nec adorant nec invocandum censent, et nihilominus quia Trinitatis opinionem abjecerunt ex nostro cætu esse existimantur, aliquis omnino sit numerus.”

“ may be secured in our churches. For  
 “ by making a point of retaining this, all  
 “ judaical errors will easily be rooted out.  
 “ But if this be neglected, judaism will  
 “ prevail every where ; if it may not rather  
 “ be called a filthy epicureism, or even  
 “ atheism ; as our brother D. Gregory Paul,  
 “ with great piety and learning warned the  
 “ Transylvanians, when Fr. Davides’s affair  
 “ began to be discussed. In disputing then  
 “ with those, who do not allow the adoration  
 “ and worship of Christ, it will be very  
 “ preposterous to endeavour to remove them  
 “ from other jewish errors, before they are  
 “ freed from this so great blindness and ig-  
 “ norance, which is the most certain and  
 “ everlasting source of all such errors.—  
 “ But if there be those who cannot by any  
 “ means be brought to acknowledge Christ’s  
 “ divine power and personal administration  
 “ of his kingdom at present, in my opinion  
 “ there should no more society or intercourse  
 “ be kept up with such persons in religious  
 “ matters. And moreover to prevent any  
 “ person hereafter from sliding into such  
 “ impiety, among other methods that might  
 “ be taken, I should hold it quite right,  
 “ that



“ that an injunction should be laid upon all  
 “ ministers, that in their public devotions,  
 “ on certain stated days, they should be  
 “ bound to offer up prayer expressly and  
 “ by name, to Jesus Christ. For although  
 “ most fitly, from the beginning, in the  
 “ christian church, whether by particular  
 “ appointment, or by custom, it has been  
 “ usual to pray to God himself, in order to  
 “ preserve to him invariably his just preroga-  
 “ tive: yet it appears from history, that after  
 “ Christ’s glory and power were manifested,  
 “ he was wont to (*M*) be invoked in prayer by  
 “ his followers, in their assemblies for wor-  
 “ ship. And if ever the times called for  
 “ such an appointment, it seems to be ne-  
 “ cessary now for us, when we are pub-  
 “ licly slandered, as despisers (*N*) of Jesus  
 “ Christ, from our being ranked among  
 “ these

(*M*) N. B. There is no example in the Scriptures of  
 such worship of Christ. The heathen converts very soon  
 corrupted the gospel, it is probable, in this, as well as in  
 other respects: by which it suffers to this day.

(*N*) I hope to be excused inserting here, without  
 leave, the remark of a friend, who did me the favour to  
 look over these papers, before they were sent to the press.

“ At the close of the extract, Socinus speaks the truth,

R

“ and

“ these men, who rejecting in common with  
 “ us the doctrine of the Trinity, and pro-  
 “ fessing themselves to be the disciples of  
 “ Christ, do nevertheless refuse to worship  
 “ and pray to him.”

*Remarks on this letter.*

1. We have here one instance among a thousand others, of the wretched lengths to which warm opinionated christians of the best understandings, may be carried, against those who refuse assent to their favourite notions, which they have laid down as necessary to salvation. It is *judaism*; it is *epicureism*; nay it is *atheism* itself, according to Socinus, not to agree with him in worshipping and praying to Jesus Christ: as if those Unitarians, who did not see any ground in the Scriptures for praying to any person but God himself, could not be as virtuous characters,

“ and assigns the very reason of this violent language. It  
 “ was to save himself from the reproach of those he had  
 “ left. And such we well remember, some of the Clerical  
 “ Society at the Feathers sustained from the *more moderate*  
 “ Reformers.”

characters, and as sincere christians, as himself.

2. His next uncharitable step is, to forbid all union and intercourse with such persons in the things of religion : which was to publish, that they held some very dangerous and pernicious sentiments, and amounted to the same as forbidding to hold any friendly society of any kind with them. For where any are taught to shun and keep at a distance from others, on *religious* accounts, they will soon transfer it to the associations of civil life ; and thus learn *piously* to hate and persecute one another.

3. But in that other device, which Socinus falls upon, to constrain all those to whom his influence could extend, to worship Christ, against their better persuasion ; there is something still more to be condemned. For he advises the Synod to make a law, contrary to their settled practice, to enforce the offering up of prayer, on certain stated days, to Jesus Christ ; and not to pray, as was their usual form, to God only. This was to compel those who were of a different persuasion, or doubting, to go against their conscience ; or else to drive them from the



christian society, and mark them out as irreligious characters.

4. All that our Saviour, by himself, or by his apostles, required of those who came to him, to qualify them to become his followers ; or, as we speak, to intitle them to the name of Christians ; was, to believe him to be the Christ. Other doctrines they were to believe and receive afterwards, as far as they could come at the knowlege of them. But Socinus here sets up a new christianity of his own, a new religion ; and will not allow any to be christians, who do not pray to and worship Jesus Christ, although they declare themselves ready to do it, if they could find that Christ himself had ever enjoined it.

It was here indeed, in the whole of his conduct, that Socinus was fundamentally wrong ; in making his private religious opinions and practice, a model and standard for others to be governed by, and to follow. With regard to himself, a man may say, that to embrace certain opinions, and adhere to one way of worship, is necessary to *his own salvation*. For example ; it may be necessary for you to pray to Christ, if you are

fully persuaded in your mind that he ought to be worshiped ; and for me not to worship him, if convinced from the holy Scriptures that he can neither hear my prayer, nor help me ; and that this belongs to God alone. It is not however, because either the one or the other opinion, or practice, is necessary to Salvation for other men ; to worship or not to worship Christ ; (although there is certainly a right, and a wrong, in the case) but because neither you, nor I, can approve ourselves to God, unless we act the part of honest men, and follow the dictates of our consciences, in this, as well as in all other points.

In all ages, it has been too much the way of warm and well-intentioned, but narrow-minded christians, like Socinus, to paint the characters and opinions of those who dissented from them, in the worst light, as deistical, atheistical, and what not ? Where such injurious representations are made by men, who in other respects are justly esteemed, it is often an useful service to hold them up to public view, in their true light. And there is an instance of the kind, in an author abovesited by me, which

well deserves censure; and which by no means leads me from my subject, to mention.

The late Dr. Doddridge, in that part of the life of Colonel Gardiner, where he is apologizing for the Colonel's warmth in defence of certain points of doctrine, maintained in the established churches of England and Scotland; after a very uncharitable reflection on some of the Ministers of those churches, who did not conform their public discourses to those formularies of faith they had once subscribed: proceeds to say,

“(n) I must observe that it was the Colonel's most steadfast persuasion, that all those notions which represent our blessed Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit, as mere creatures, or which set aside the atonement of the former, or the influences of the latter, do sap the very foundation of christianity, by rejecting the most glorious doctrines peculiar to it. He had attentively observed (what indeed is too obvious) the unhappy influence which the denial of these principles often has upon the characters of Ministers, and on  
“ their

(n) Remarkable Passages in the life of Colonel Gardiner by Dr. Doddridge, 6th Edition, 12mo. p. 88, 89.



“ their success; and was persuaded, that  
 “ an attempt to substitute that mutilated  
 “ form of christianity which remains, when  
 “ these essentials of it are taken away, has  
 “ proved one of the most successful methods,  
 “ which the great enemy of souls has ever  
 “ taken in these latter days, to lead men by  
 “ insensible degrees into Deism, vice, and  
 “ perdition.” Soon after the doctor adds;  
 “ On the whole, it was indeed his delibe-  
 “ rate judgment, that the Arian, Socinian,  
 “ and Pelagian doctrines were highly disho-  
 “ nourable to God, and dangerous to the  
 “ souls of men; and that it was the duty  
 “ of private christians to be greatly on their  
 “ guard against those ministers by whom  
 “ they are entertained, lest their minds  
 “ should be corrupted from the simplicity  
 “ that is in Christ. Yet he sincerely ab-  
 “ horred the thought of persecution for  
 “ conscience sake.”

Dr. Doddridge here exhibits a curious,  
 but not uncommon piece of self-delusion,  
 in saying very gravely, that Col. Gardiner  
*abhorred the thought of all persecution for*  
*conscience sake*, when some instances are at  
 the very time given, of his persecuting con-

scientious men to a certain degree, and when the Doctor, who shews marks of approbation all along, is, at the moment, *beating the drum*, (pardon the coarseness of the expression for its truth) to excite the bad passions of christians, and set them one against the other. For what else is it? What gentler name can be given to such descriptions of the characters of gospel ministers; and accounts of their doctrines as tending to ruin the souls of men for ever? Are not these likely to inflame the minds of those unthinking multitudes, who pay an implicit deference to what is said by a person in so high repute as Dr. Doddridge, and fill them with implacable resentments against such ministers, and their teachings. We have read in the memorials of past times, and have experienced in our own, the wretched effects of the like passionate and injurious representations. And after all, what is there in the peculiar tenets of *Arians, Socinians, Pelagians*, that does not tend to make men good and virtuous? which is surely the great and ultimate end of the gospel. Admit that they may not think so highly of the person of Christ, as the *Trinitarians* do; yet surely the condescension  
and

and merciful goodness of Almighty God, manifested by Christ, are not lessened, but increased, on their plan. And is not this a sufficient motive, can there be a greater, to carry men to the highest attainments of piety, benevolence, and integrity? Is all true wisdom and goodness confined to those christians, who call themselves orthodox? Was not Dr. Clarke, who is comonly esteemed an *Arian*, a character as virtuous, pious, and exemplary in all respects, as Dr. Doddridge; and his writings, to say the least, as valuable a legacy to the christian world, and to all lovers of truth? And without disparagement to Calvin; wherein was Socinus, who was a strict *Pelagian*, inferior to him in true piety and virtue? Few persons seem to have lived more under a continual sense of the presence of God with him, and regard to him, than the latter, from his writings, appears to have done.

And with respect to the superior beneficial effects, said to arise from the preaching of the doctrines of *atonement*, and the like, in bringing men off from vicious practices; if inquiry be made, it will be found, where it really has been the fact; not to have been  
so



so much owing to the doctrines themselves, as to the fervour, earnestness, and diligence of the preachers of them; which will at all times proportionably affect the hearers on all subjects, especially upon those most important ones, relating to God, and a future eternal world and their lot in it, and win many over to seriousness and sobriety of mind.

The great point however, to which every gospel-preacher is to bend his attention, is not, what doctrines we ourselves may imagine, to be most suited to the conversion and salvation of sinners, but what it is that the Scriptures hold forth for these purposes; and to rest easy and persuaded, that what we learn there, will most surely in the end promote the virtue and happiness of the world, with whatever name, or in whatever way, angry men may brand it, or traduce the teachers of it.

I have dwelled the longer on this matter, because it has fallen much in my way to observe, that insinuations of this nature against the characters of other christians; and vehement condemnation of the doctrines held and taught by them, made by such pious  
and

and popular writers as Dr. Doddridge, not only indispose thousands for the truth, and for free inquiry, the only way to come at it; but also are often of the most fatal consequence, in generating and cherishing a bitter malevolent spirit in some christians against their brethren; to the disgrace and discredit of christianity; and to the disturbance, not only of private families and neighbourhoods, but sometimes of whole nations and kingdoms.

## S E C T I O N V.

*Of the consequences which ensued from Socinus's worship of Christ.*

**T**HE same principle of praying to Christ, whilst esteemed by them no more than a creature; and the same narrowness of spirit and intolerance, in not allowing those Unitarians to be christians, who did not conform to their practice, continued among the disciples and followers of Socinus, upon the continent,

continent, after his decease. Various instances of it might be produced ; but it will be sufficiently evident from the following extracts from their Catechisms, published at different periods.

The first was printed in 1605, a year after Socinus's death, in the Polish language ; and translated into Latin, and dedicated to our king James, in 1609, four years after. It thus exhibits their sentiments on this head.

(o) “ *Question.* What think you of these men, who do not pray to Christ, nor allow that he is to be worshiped.”

“ *Answer.* I think, *they are by no means christians ; because in fact they do not own Jesus to be the Christ : and though in words they dare not deny it, they do it in their deeds.*”

In two following editions of the same work, improved and enlarged, in 1659 and 1680, they are more mild in their language,  
but

(o) “ *Quid vero sentis de iis hominibus, qui Christum non invocant, nec adorandum censent ?*

Prorsus non esse christianos sentio, cum reipsa Christum non habeant ; et licet verbis id negare non audeant, reipsa negent tamen.”

Catechesis Eccl.—Polon. &c. p. 115. Racoviæ. 1609.



but not less peremptory in their censure, that such as did not invoke the name of Christ in prayer, were not christians. The article is word for word the same in both, and runs thus :

(p) “ Q. But what do you think of these  
 “ men, who hold that Christ is neither to  
 “ be prayed to, nor worshiped ?”

“ A. Since they only are christians, who  
 “ acknowlege Jesus to be the Christ, i. e.  
 “ the heavenly king of the people of God ;  
 “ and therefore worship him, and hesitate  
 “ not to pray to him : on which account,  
 “ as we have seen above, *christians are de-*  
 “ *scribed as those that called upon the name*  
 “ *of the Lord Jesus* : from all this, it is  
 “ easy to be inferred, that those who refuse  
 “ to do this, are not yet christians, although  
 “ they

(p) *Quid vero sentis de iis hominibus, qui Christum nec invocandum, nec adorandum censent.*

“ Quandoquidem illi demum christiani sunt, qui Jesum agnoscunt esse Christum, seu cœlestem illum populi divini regem, ac porro eum divina ratione colunt, ejusque nomen invocare non dubitant ; qua de causa supra vidimus christianos ita describi, quod nomen Domini Jesu Christi invocent : facile intelligitur, eos, qui id facere nolunt, christianos hactenus non esse, quamvis alioqui Christi nomen profiteantur, et doctrinæ illius se adhærere dicant.”

Catech. Eccl. Polon. p. 172. Irenopoli. 1659.

“ they profess the name of Christ, and maintain that they keep close to his doctrine.”

*N.B.* The compilers of this catechism were mistaken in alleging, that christians are ever described in the New Testament, as *those that called upon the name of the Lord Jesus*; that is, as his worshipers. They should rather have said: that they are described, as *those that were called by the name of Jesus*; that is, his disciples, his followers. For so ought those passages to which they allude, to be translated and understood.

Thus Acts ix. 14. *Here he hath authority from the chief priests, to bind all that call on thy name*; should be translated, *to bind all that are called by thy name*. And ver. 21. *Is not this he which destroyed them that called on this name in Jerusalem!* should be, *them that are called by this name*; that is, christians. And so, 1 Cor. i. 2. *with all that in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*, should be *with all that in every place are called by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*; that is, with all christians (*a*).

This

(a) See “Two Dissertations. On the Preface to St. John’s gospel; and on Praying to Jesus Christ.”—p. 93—99.

This turn however, which was taken by Socinus, and those properly called Socinians, was a great bar to the spreading of the doctrine of the Divine Unity, otherwise so ably maintained and defended by them. For their own professed practice, and rigid demand from others, of worshipping Christ whom they held not to be above the condition of a human being, raised a great clamour, and created infinite prejudices against them and their writings, in the breasts of the whole body of Athanasian christians, who had separated from the church of Rome ; with whom it was a general fixed principle, that to be adored and invoked in prayer was the sole privilege of the Deity, an high prerogative and excellency, of which *no creature could be capable*, and therefore intirely incommunicable.

Their argument upon this point deserves attention. I shall give it, as I find it stated by Dr. Clagget, a Divine of eminence in the church of England. And I apprehend it will appear to have great weight in it, so as not easily to be overfet by inferences drawn from Christ's kingdom, and the supposed extent of the powers bestowed upon him ; or



by one or two precarious doubtful instances of prayer to him ; or indeed hardly by any thing, but an exprefs command of God to make him an object of worship : and this Socinus never asserted ; but the contrary. It is in the Doctor's Sermon on Matth. iv. 10. Vol. i. p. 122, 123.

“ Prayer and thanksgiving (says he) are proper expressions of divine honour or worship ; the *proper expressions of honouring God as God* ; because they are the acknowledgements of God's omnipotence, sovereignty, and infinite goodness ; and because our calling upon him at all times and in all places, is a clear acknowledgement of his omnipresence and infinite knowlege. For when we speak to an invisible Being, we can have no assurance that we are heard, but only this, that the Being is every where present ; and therefore, though we see him not, we know that he is with us, and that our prayer is not lost. In these two things then, that is, in prayer and thanksgiving ; or, to include both in one expression, *in religious invocation, the substance of divine worship consists.*” And one of his inferences from his text, upon this ground is ; “ all honour which is done

to

to any invifible Being befides God, by formal invocation of it, or calling upon it, muft therefore neceffarily be idolatry; becaufe it afcribes, in the very nature of the act, omniprefence to it; which is a divine perfection (*b*).”

We may fee in what Beza faid, in his time, of the *unitarian* worfhipers of Chrift, in Poland and Tranfylvania, how much the *orthodox* chriftians, as he calls himfelf and others

(*b*) The fame opinion is thus briefly but peremptorily expreffed by another proteftant writer. “ Prayer is one “ of the principal branches of religious worfhip, and *the* “ peculiar prerogative of the Great God. If therefore men “ make the object of it a creature, they are guilty of “ downright idolatry.”

Serm. at Salter’s Hall, Vol. ii. p. 8.

An author, high in worldly rank, thus puts the argument :

“ If our Saviour be but a creature, how can divine worfhip be paid to him agreeable to the light of nature? Or, how can we *change the truth of God into a lie*, (Rom. i. 20. 25.) which is the account the apoftle gives of it, according to common fenfe; and this in fpite of the many exprefs texts of Scripture, and the firft commandment, in *doing fervice to one*, (Gal. iv. 8.) *who by nature is no God?*

“ For no excellency whatfoever, fhort of the godhead, can entitle any perfon to divine worfhip; for God

others of his own sentiments, were averse to them, on that account. It is in the very entrance, the first words of a letter of his, written in 1567, from Geneva, quoted above, p. 171, that he thus exclaims against them :

(c) “ Who could have thought it possible, that among the very men who profess them-

(Isaiah xlii. 8.) *will not give his glory to another*; and what the angel said to St. John, is no less true in this case; (Rev. xix. 10.) *See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant: WORSHIP GOD.* So that if he be a creature, he ought not to be worship'd; or, if he must be worship'd, he must be God.”

“ *The Answer of the Earl of Nottingham to Mr. Whiston's Letter to him, concerning the eternity of the Son of God, and of the holy Ghost.* p. 4. 6th Edition. 1721.”

(c) “ Quis fieri posse credidisset, ut in iis ipsis, qui se profitentur, abjecta omni idololatria, Christum adorare, comperirentur, qui Deitate illum spoliarent, et *θεωρῶπων* in *θεῶν ἀνθρώπων* transformarent? Nam certe amentis est hominis, et prorsus *ἀναίσθητε*, idololatram se negare, et tamen eum verum ac natura Deum esse inficiari, quem invocandum, omnibusque divinis honoribus afficiendum, prædices. Reperta sunt tamen jam olim ejusmodi hominum monstra, quæ propterea Antichristos orthodoxi vocant, ut Cerinthus et Hebion ipsis etiam apostolorum temporibus: quorum blasphemiam interpolarent postea Theodotus Byzantinus, et execrandus ille Samosatenus, ejus ecclesiæ conspurcator, in qua primi sunt christiani nominati.”



themselves the worshipers of Christ, and to be free from all idolatry, there should be found those who *rob him of his deity*, and *transform the God-man* into a mere *divine man*. For surely it is the mark of perfect insanity, and being void of all sense, for a person to disown his being an idolater, at the same time that he invokes in prayer, and pays the highest divine honours to one whom he denies to be the true self-existent God. But such monsters were formerly to be found, and were by the orthodox called *Antichrists*, such as Cerinthus, and Hebion, even in the very days of the (*d*) apostles. And their blasphemy was new vamped and furnished afterwards, by Theodotus of Byzantium, and the execrable Paul of Samosata, the foul disgrace of that church, where the disciples were first called *christians*."

The

(*d*) *Beza* might have extended his invective to the apostles themselves; who appear to have had no idea of their Lord and Master, Jesus, being any other than a human being. It happens also unfortunately for him, that the apostle John, in his first epistle, calls some of the first heathen converts to the gospel, *Antichrists*; *because they denied Christ to have been really and truly a man*. See a "Sequel to the Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick." p. 291.

The excellent and gentle Tillotson calls no names, but is no less keen in his raillery on these men for their inconsistency, in worshipping Christ, when they held him to be not above the condition of a creature.

(e) “ And can they discern no difficulty,  
 “ no absurdity, *says he*, in this? What, no  
 “ absurdity in bringing idolatry by a back  
 “ door into the christian religion, one main  
 “ design whereof was to banish idolatry out  
 “ of the world? And will they in earnest  
 “ contest this matter with us, that the giv-  
 “ ing divine worship to a mere creature is  
 “ not idolatry? And can they vindicate  
 “ themselves in this point any other way,  
 “ than will in a great measure acquit the  
 “ pagans and the papists from the charge of  
 “ idolatry?

“ What? no absurdity in a god as it were  
 “ but of yesterday? in a creature-god? in a  
 “ god merely by positive institution, and  
 “ this *in opposition to a plain moral precept*  
 “ *of eternal obligation*, and to the fixed and  
 “ immutable nature of things?”

“ So that to avoid the shadow and appear-  
 “ ance of a plurality of deities, they run  
 “ really

“ really into it ; and for aught I can see,  
 “ into downright idolatry, by *worshipping a*  
 “ *creature besides the Creator, who is blessed*  
 “ *for ever.*” Rom. i. 25.

There is an old proverb, that he, the walls of whose house are made of glass, should be careful how he throws the first stone at his neighbour's window.

In the very prostrate condition, in which the church of Christ has lain for many ages, respecting the article of divine worship, first caused by the heathen converts to christianity, so that the pure worship of the (f) Father, of the parent Mind, the single creator and governor of the universe, is not publicly held forth and professed, but the worship (g) of two other persons mingled with

(f) John iv. 21. 23. *Jesus saith ; the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father, in spirit and in truth : for the Father seeketh such to worship HIM.*

(g) *the worship of two other persons*] Upon mentioning an obscure intimation thrown out by the famous Mr. *Joseph Mede*, in the last century, of some sin “ whereof “ the whole body of the Reformation is guilty, and which “ nevertheless is counted no sin ;” and supposing farther *Sir Isaac Newton* to have had the same in his mind, when



with it: and, together with these, in most christian countries, there is a farther addition made, of the worship of the mother of Christ; and of a tribe also of dead men and women, called Saints, exactly answering to the demon-worship of the heathens, of *Jupiter, Juno, Apollo, Minerva*, and so on: In such a state of things, the good Archbishop should have been more sure that his accusation of the Socinians could not be retorted upon himself. If he charged those worshipers of Christ with bringing idolatry

he speaks of “all nations having corrupted the christian religion, and of effecting a recovery of the long lost truth;” “I can by no means conceive, says a living author of great eminence, what it is that these learned and judicious writers here point at, except it be the *Supremacy of the God and Father of all: (who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* Eph. iv. 6. Εἰς Θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων, καὶ διὰ πάντων, καὶ ἐν πάντων υμῶν) which they might possibly believe to be a truth, that has been denied and lost by the general declaration of the churches, that *Two other Persons are his equals.* This is so far from being looked upon as a sin, that it is a sign of orthodoxy, and is a doctrine that pervades the whole Reformation.”

“Reflections—on the xvth chapter of Mr. Gibbon’s History, &c. page 73. note, by Henry Taylor, Rector of Crawley and Vicar of Portsmouth, Hants.” 1781.

try by a back door into the christian church, he should have considered whether they might not upon good grounds reply to him, that he ought to look about him, lest, in his own system, *idolatry*, or *something very like it*, did not enter, in full front, at the fore-door, by his distinct and separate worship and invocation of two other persons, by name, together with the supreme Father of all : which however glossed over in his own mind, (t) by metaphysical abstraction and refine-

(t) Upon that passage, *The Lord thy God is one Lord—therefore thou shalt love him with all thy heart, &c. this is the first and great commandment*; the Archbishop observes, “ that it comprehends in it, that we should serve *him only*, “ and pay *no religious worship* to any but *him*. For to pay “ *religious worship* to any thing, is to *make it a God*, and to “ acknowledge it for such : and therefore GOD being but “ *one*, we can give *religious worship* to none but *him only*. “ And among all the parts of *religious worship*, none is “ more peculiarly appropriated to the *Deity*, than solemn “ *invocation* and *prayer*. For he to whom men address “ their requests, at all times, and in all places, must be “ supposed to be, always, every where present; to under- “ stand all our desires and wants, and to be able to supply “ them : and this, *God only is, and can do.*” Tillotson’s Works, Vol. I. p. 498. This pious and good man could make these just remarks on the unity of God, and of his worship; and yet through the influence of the

refinement, as the worship of one God only ; would, by all persons in general who attended such worship, and in all just construction and interpretation, by every cool observer, be esteemed the worship of three several intelligent Beings or Agents : and therefore whether, (to use his own words) this his own worship was not “ *in opposition* to a plain moral precept of eternal obligation, (Exodus xx. 23. *Thou shalt have no other gods before ME*) and to the fixed and immutable nature of things.”

scholastic philosophy of the times, in which he was educated, without suspecting there was any thing wrong or inconsistent in it, could offer up prayers to two persons, to Jesus and the Holy Spirit, together with the person of the Father, and believe and be persuaded all the while, that he was praying to one God, one single Being, one single HE. Such philosophy, 'tis to be hoped, will in time give way to common sense, and the plain meaning of the Scriptures.

## S E C T I O N VI.

*Of Socinus's severe opinion relating to the salvation of the Papists.*

**H**OWEVER harsh and dictatorial Socinus was in his censure and condemnation of other Unitarians, in not allowing them



them the name of christians, who refused to worship and pray to Jesus Christ; he carried his exclusive edict against the papists much farther. For christians (q) of all other denominations he owned, might be saved, however differing from himself in religious sentiments; if their lives were conformable to the precepts of the gospel: “ but I cannot, says he, “ affirm the same “ concerning the papists; all of whom, at “ this day, I look upon as idolaters: and “ I know, that no idolater can inherit “ eternal life.”

But surely it bespoke a very blameable inattention in this acute writer, to class the christian worshipers of Saints and images with the idolaters mentioned by the apostle, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. where he says: *Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom*

(q) “ Quod ad me attinet, nullum mihi est dubium, quin omnes illi, sive Calviniani, sive Lutherani, sive Anabaptistæ, sive Ariani, qui se ad præscriptum Christi gesserint, (nec enim dubito, ex singulis istorum ordinibus tales non paucos esse, aut esse saltem posse) cœlestis vitæ hæreditatem adituri sint. *De Papistis idem affirmare nolim,* quos omnes hodie idololatræ esse statuo: novi vero, neminem idololatrarum salutis eternæ compotem fore.”

Socini Op. Vol. I. p. 502.

*kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.* For it is evident, from the connexion and company, in which these idolaters are placed, that they were esteemed by the apostle similar to the rest, whom he mentions, and very immoral persons. And it is well known, that among the Corinthians, many lewd and abominable rites were practised, as a part of their false religion, and believed to be authorized and sanctified by it. But the principles of all professed christians, and of the papists as much as of any others, lead them to hold all such shameful things in abhorrence; and therefore they ought not to be compared or ranked with such characters.

I would moreover add, that it would be equally injurious to apply to *all* the *heathen* idolaters, what St. Paul here speaks only of some of them; and to suppose, that *merely on account of their idolatry and false worship*, they will not inherit the kingdom of God; but be outcasts from him and from happiness.

ness for ever. For surely it is to entertain a most unworthy thought of the righteous and merciful Father of all his creatures, to imagine that he will cut off from his favour for ever, those of them who have honestly, though imperfectly, acted up to the light he gave them, however weak and glimmering; who have lived and pursued truth and goodness so far as they saw them; which doubtless has been the case of thousands and ten thousands of the heathen world; and who have only been mistaken in the object of their religious worship, through unavoidable and invincible darkness and ignorance?

And here I cannot but think that learned and good man, the late Bp. *Pearce*, too severe in his crimination of the worship of Christ, upon the supposition that there is no authority in the Scriptures for it (*e*).  
 “ If Christ, says he, is not to be worshiped;  
 “ if we have not firm and sure authority  
 “ from Scripture for worshiping him, then  
 “ it must be acknowledged that christians  
 “ direct their worship to false objects, and  
 “ *are therefore guilty of great impiety.*”

This

(*e*) Bp. *Pearce*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. p. 364.



This is intirely Socinus's wrong idea, and hasty presumption ; that merely to worship a false god is criminal, and impious. Impiety can only be charged, where there is a want of due reverence and regard for the object men worship, and not where their religious regards are only misplaced and turned to false objects ; and there can be no crime, where men act wrong through insuperable ignorance. The *Bishop* should rather have said ; that such sincere christians as worship Christ, believing they have authority for it, when really they have none, are men much to be pitied ; but that they commit no crime, contract no guilt whatsoever, in such circumstances, by directing their worship to a false object.

Very different therefore is the idolatry of the heathens condemned by St. Paul, from that which obtains now, and has subsisted so long, among the greater part of the christian world. Nor should any one presume to judge and condemn them for it ; but leave that province to HIM to whom it belongs. This only perhaps we may be allowed to say concerning it : that where men have not made use of the faculties, lights  
and

and advantages given them, to know and worship the true God; but have suffered themselves to be diverted and drawn away from serious inquiry, by indolence, by insatiable pursuits of pleasure, or ambition; or where through hypocrisy, and secular selfish regards, like many of the heathen world, they have stifled their better knowledge, and have with the multitude, *fallen down before Nebuchadnezzar's image*, worshiped whatever was established by public authority: in such cases, they will be responsible to the judicature of a holy and just God, and lover of truth, in the degree and proportion that such sinister interested motives, or evil passions have been predominant in them, and turned them from his true worship; and receive good or evil according to their works.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Of the state of the Unitarian doctrine in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and of the Stuarts.*

## SECTION I.

*Of the cause of the great silence concerning the Divine Unity, during this period.*

**A**N historian of great credit, in an account of the “Spanish Protestant Martyrology,” begins his preface with the following remark on the situation of things in that country, about the time of the death of *Charles V.*

“The eminent Spanish Divines, that were sent by the emperor *Charles V.* and his son *Philip*, into Germany, England, and Flanders, to convert the Protestants in those countries



countries to the *Roman Faith*, having by conversing with the Reformers, and reading their books, been converted themselves, returned home full of zeal to propagate that holy faith through their native country: and being persons, both by their exemplary piety, and great learning, extremely well qualified for so great and blessed a work; their success in it was such, that had not a speedy and full stop been put to their pious labours, by the merciless Inquisition, the whole kingdom of *Spain* had in all likelihood been converted to the protestant religion, in less time than any other country had ever been before. *So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed* by the labours of such great men, and who had been called to the knowlege and love of it, after such an extraordinary manner.” (a)

If the report should be found true, that by the happy disposition of the present king of *Spain*, a just and benevolent prince, that horrid tribunal of the Inquisition is to be  
abolished;

(a) “Miscellaneous Tracts, by Dr. Geddes, p. 447. where he produces the testimony of contemporary writers, themselves papists, to this very remarkable fact.

abolished; it is to be hoped, that a still *pureer protestant faith* will make its way into that country; which, amidst other important truths, may hold forth the Creator and Father of the universe, as the only true God, and object of religious worship; and be a pattern in its turn, in this respect, for all protestant countries to follow.

I would apply this remark of Dr. Geddes, to account for the singular inattention and unconcern about the doctrine of the *Divine Unity*, during the period of which I am about to treat. It appeared above, p. 84, from undoubted authority, that there was such an enlightened zeal for this doctrine, and it spread itself so much, in the short reign of Edward VI; that his Bishops, quite alarmed at it, against the prince's inclinations, put in practice the methods of the merciless inquisition to stop it: which were followed and adopted afterwards by their brethren, as well as countenanced by the succeeding princes.

The memory of Elizabeth, and of her successor, James I. will be for ever tarnished in this behalf: she, for burning alive some unhappy Hollanders, Anabaptists, who  
had

had taken refuge here, (*b*) against much importunity and intreaty to spare them: James, for his still more cool and wanton savageness towards (*c*) *Legatt* and *Wightman*; and a *Spanish Unitarian*, who happened unfortunately to be in his dominions and within his reach.

The secret, arbitrary proceedings, and dreadful punishments of the Inquisition, have hindered all free examination of the Scriptures, and search into their true meaning, in Spain, to this hour: though the hour of darkness, we trust, is now passing away. In our own country, in the interval of time before us, all such inquiry was suppressed by the horrible *burning alive* of all persons, who durst make use of their understandings to find out the God that made them, and declare and worship HIM, in any way different from what was established by the civil magistrate; when they had discovered him. Men's minds were every where kept in awe, and scared at the thought of prying into a subject so big with mystery and danger.

T

We

(*b*) Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick,  
P. 47.

(*c*) Ibid. p. 48, &c.



We should have been glad to have been better acquainted with the history and characters of our two countrymen just mentioned; whom death in its most frightful shape did not deter from an open avowal of what they believed to be the truth, in opposition to prevailing error; esteeming it to be a duty which they owed to God, and for the service of their fellow-creatures. Both appear to have been ingenious and learned. One of them, (*E*) by the testimony of his adversaries, of unspotted morals; and we may well conclude the same of the other, since nothing is told us to the contrary. After much fruitless search, what follows is all the farther information which I have been able to gather concerning them.

In a letter from Mr. Locke to his friend Limborch, there is an account of *Legatt* and *Wightman's* condemnation, and a list of the opinions, for which the latter suffered; taken out of an English book, which it has not been my good fortune to meet with, under this title, “ The History of the first  
“ fourteen

(*E*) Apology for resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, &c. p. 50.

“ fourteen years of king James :” (without  
 “ the name of the author.) “ To which is  
 “ added, A true relation of the commiffi-  
 “ ons and warrants, for the condemnation  
 “ and burning of Bartholomew Legatt, and  
 “ Edward Wightman, the one in Weft  
 “ Smithfield, the other at Litchfield, in the  
 “ year 1611, figned with king James’s own  
 “ hand.” (*d*) The three firft mentioned  
 opinions for which the latter fuffered, are

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I. That

(*d*) “ Hic Bartholomæus Legatt ab epifcopo Londi-  
 “ neni, affidentibus confentientibusque aliis reverendis  
 “ epifcopis, doctifque clericis, hærefeos condemnatus eft,  
 “ et brachio fecolari traditus, et deinde igni commiffus et  
 “ combuftus in Weft-Smithfield Londini.

“ Eodem fupplicio affectus eft Edwardus Wightman,  
 “ in civitate Litchfield, anno 1611, ab epifcopo Coven-  
 “ triæ et Litchfield, hærefeos damniatus, ob has fequentes  
 “ opiniones.

“ 1. Quod non eft trinitas perfonarum, patris, filii, et  
 “ fpiritus fancti, in unitate Deitatis.

“ 2. Quod Iefus Chriftus non eft verus, naturalis filius  
 “ Dei, Deus perfectus, et ejufdem fubftantiæ, æternita-  
 “ tis, et majeftatis cum patre, refpectu Deitatis fuæ.

“ 3. Quod Iefus Chriftus eft homo folummodo, et  
 “ mera creatura, et non Deus fimul et homo in una  
 “ perfona.”

“ *Locke’s Works.* Vol. IV. p. 456, 457.”

1. That there is no trinity of persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the unity of the Godhead.

2. That Jesus Christ is not the true, natural Son of God, perfect God, of the same substance, eternity, and majesty with the Father, with respect to his godhead.

3. That Jesus Christ is man only, and a mere creature, and not God and man together in one person.

Among Wightman's other opinions that are afterwards enumerated, there are some that favour of vanity and superstition; such as his being *the prophet* foretold Deut. xviii. and by Isaiah; the *Elijah to come*, of whom Malachi speaks. But we may well hesitate here, whether such were the man's *real* sentiments, or only those which his adversaries would fix upon him. The reader will be pleased with Limborch's reply on this head.

(e) “ I thank you for the great pains you  
“ have taken to gratify me. It gives me  
“ much

(e) “ Pro labore, quem meo rogatu suscepisti, maxi-  
“ mas tibi habeo gratias. Gaudeo me ex literis tuis  
“ didicisse, quæ episcoporum illius temporis judicio hor-  
“ renda illa crimina fuerint, non nisi atrocissimo ignis  
“ supplicio



“ much satisfaction to learn from your ac-  
 “ count, what were the horrid crimes, which,  
 “ in the judgment of the Bishops of those  
 “ times, deserved the most terrible punish-  
 “ ment of being burnt alive. I observe  
 “ that sometimes one and the same opi-  
 “ nion is delivered in different words ; and  
 “ so, what might have been comprized in  
 “ one, is stretched out into several articles,  
 “ with a view, doubtless, that the great  
 “ number of heresies might seem the more

T 3

“ to

“ supplicio luenda. Video quandoque unum idemque  
 “ dogma diversis verbis enuntiari, atque ita, quod uno  
 “ comprehendi poterat articulo, in plures distendi, procul  
 “ dubio ut plurimum hæresium reatus tam atroci supplicio  
 “ prætexi possit. Malim dogmata ipsis eorum, qui ea  
 “ professi fuerint, verbis legere expressa ; sic certus forem,  
 “ me non legere consequentias, sed ipsa dogmata, eaque  
 “ non terminis odiosis concepta, forte in alienum sensum  
 “ detorta, sed ipsis autorum verbis nude et candide enun-  
 “ tiata, nihilque continentia, nisi quod ipse, cujus causa  
 “ agitur, pro suo agnoscit. Quando autem procedendi  
 “ modum video, ad sancti tribunalis instar omnia exacte  
 “ esse conformata, non sine dolore, agnosco.—————  
 “ Talia in Reformationis opprobrium cedunt. Mihi  
 “ enim perinde christianæ charitati adversari videtur tri-  
 “ bunal de fide, sive id propter Tiberim, sive Lemanum,  
 “ sive Thamesin constitutur ; eadem quippe exercetur  
 “ crudelitas, licet alio in loco, et ab aliis hominibus.”  
 Amstelod, 6 Nov. 1699. Id. Ibid. p. 458.

“ to justify the infliction of such shocking  
 “ torments. I should have liked much bet-  
 “ ter to have had the men’s opinions, *ex-*  
 “ *pressed in their own words* : which would  
 “ have assured me, that I was not reading  
 “ *the consequences* that others drew from  
 “ them, but *their own real sentiments* ; and  
 “ those, not clothed in odious obnoxious  
 “ terms, or turned to a quite different sense,  
 “ but directly and fairly expressed in the  
 “ very phrase of the persons themselves,  
 “ and containing nothing but what they  
 “ that were accused, acknowledged as their  
 “ own.” He afterwards concludes, “ These  
 “ things are a scandal to the Reformation.  
 “ A court of inquisition into men’s faith is  
 “ alike contrary to christian charity, whe-  
 “ ther it be erected on the banks of the  
 “ *Tiber*, or of the lake of *Geneva*, or by  
 “ the side of the *Thames* ; for it is the same  
 “ iniquitous cruelty, though exercised in  
 “ another place, and on different subjects.”

Amsterdam, 6 Nov. 1699.

I reckon this most antichristian spirit to  
 have been much kept up and strengthened  
 among us, by the connection which our  
 Reformers, and Queen Elizabeth’s bishops  
 and

and clergy, maintained with Calvin first, and Beza afterwards; and particularly from the notes of the latter of them, upon the New Testament, which were in high request; and his other writings. The temper and disposition which these tended to infuse towards all who denied the Divinity of Christ, was formerly intimated, (G) and may be farther seen in the following sample (from one of his tracts,) of his treatment of the unhappy Servetus; who had been burnt to death, the year before, viz. 27 Oct. 1553.

The title of it is (f), “ *A treatise on the right of the civil magistrate to punish heretics; in answer to the farrago of Martin Bellius, and the sect of modern Sceptics, by Theodore Beza of Vezelai. 1554.*” It was well said, that it might have better been intitled, “ The right of the civil magistrate to be the Church’s or the Presbytery’s hangman.” The persons against

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whom

(G) Apology for resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, p. 38.

(f) De Hæreticis a civili magistratu puniendis Libellus, adversus Martini Bellii farraginem, et novorum Academicorum sectam, Theodoro Beza Vezelio auctore. Oliya Roberti Stephani. 1554.



whom he writes, had condemned in print the late cruel transactions at Geneva, by asserting that the punishment of heretics belonged not to the civil magistrate, and by confuting the arguments commonly brought in defence of persecution for religion.

*Bellius*, (which is a fictitious name, for it was dangerous for the real author of such a book to be known) had advanced (g) “*that Satan himself, (the greatest enemy to the gospel) could have done nothing more than burn those who called upon the name of Christ:*” thereby pointing to the case of Servetus, (as will be seen in Beza’s answer) who had invoked Christ whilst he was burning at the stake. For it was his persuasion, as also that of Socinus and others, after him, that prayer might sometimes be offered to Christ.

(h) “But with regard to Servetus, replies Beza, whom ye dare not mention  
“ by

(g) “*Quid enim posset aliud facere Satan, quam ut eos comburatur, qui Christi nomen invocant.*”

Beza, de hæreticis puniendis, p. 97.

(h) “Nam quod ad Servetum attinet, quem vos nominatim appellare non audetis: quo pudore ipsum in mediis flammis Christum magna voce concelebrasse, et se in eum pleno ore credere vociferatum dicitis: quum  
hoc,

“ (i) by name ; with what face can ye pre-  
 “ tend that he worshiped Christ in the midst  
 “ of

hoc, ab eo jam morituro, nullis ecclesiæ precibus extor-  
 queri potuerit, ut Christum pro æterno Dei filio agnosce-  
 ret? Neque ullis ministrorum præsentium obtestationibus  
 et pene lachrymis impetrari ut sui ipsius rationem habe-  
 ret? Nam etiam in ipso mortis articulo, suarum artium  
 oblivisci non poterat, quas tota vita exercuerat. Itaque  
 quum sedulo admoneretur, ut aliquod resipiscentiæ signum  
 daret: “ Ego, inquit, Christum æterni Dei filium esse  
 fateor.” Quum autem, detecta ejus fraude, ab eo pete-  
 retur, ut non modo æterni Dei filium, sed etiam æternum  
 esse Dei filium agnosceret, ne officium Mediatoris illi  
 eriperet: obmutescere maluit, quam filio Dei debitum  
 honorem tribuere, partim horrore mortis perturbatus, de  
 qua nunquam antea serio cogitârat; partim, ut ego existi-  
 mo, justo Dei judicio percussus. Et Christum ab ejus-  
 modi hominibus invocari arbitrabimur? Absit. Imo vero  
 quoties Christi nomen pronuntiant, toties ab ipsis Dei  
 filius blasphematur; ut qui Christum, non qualis est, et  
 qualem nobis in verbo suo sese declarat, sed qualem ipsi  
 sibi finxerunt, id est, pro vero et unico Christo idolum  
 pertinaciter amplectantur. Nam alioqui inter hæreticos  
 nullus unquam fuit, qui non Christi nomen suis erroribus  
 obtenderit, seque super Christum ædificare jactârit: sed  
 frustra; quum reipsa Christi doctrinam rejiciendo, Chris-  
 tum ipsum repudient.” Id. Ibid. p. 98, 99.

(i) Calvin and Beza, with other Swiss ministers, had  
 represented Servetus's character and opinions in so shock-  
 ing a light, that the people of Geneva, and every where,  
 held him in execration; and the few that thought other-  
 wise

“ of the flames, and cried out aloud that he  
 “ believed in him; when at the time that  
 “ his end approached, it could not be ex-  
 “ torted from him by the prayers of the  
 “ church, to acknowledge Christ to be the  
 “ *eternal* Son of God; nor could all the  
 “ intreaties, I had almost said, the tears of  
 “ the Ministers, prevail upon him to do  
 “ this, and save himself.” N. B. *Surely*  
*it was much to his honour, that neither in-*  
*treaties, nor the near prospect of the most*  
*horrible sufferings could induce him to say or*  
*do*

wife, were afraid of appearing openly for him. Beza sets out in his first page with saying; that “ a year ago,  
 “ the almighty and merciful God, the just avenger of all  
 “ wrongs and injuries done to himself, had snatched out  
 “ of the jaws of the papists, that most vile and detestable  
 “ heretic, Servetus, and delivered him up with his own  
 “ hand, as it were, to the Republic of Geneva, that it  
 “ might have the honour of inflicting the punishment  
 “ due to his crimes upon that man, of all that ever lived,  
 “ the most wicked and blasphemous.” i. e. “ Quum enim  
 abhinc annum Deus optimus, maximus, justissimus inju-  
 riarum suarum vindex, Servetum illum impurissimum  
 hæreticum ex Pontificiorum faucibus ereptum, tanquam  
 de manu Genevensi Reipublicæ tradidisset, per quam  
 homo ille omnium qui adhuc vixerunt maxime impius et  
 blasphemus, scelerum suorum poenas daret, &c.”

Id. Ibid. p. 5.



do any thing against his conscience. “ Nay,  
 “ continues he, in the very instant of death,  
 “ he could not forget his old tricks, which  
 “ he had practised all his life. For when  
 “ he was seriously reminded of giving some  
 “ signal of his repentance: *I confess*, says  
 “ he, *that Christ is the Son of the eternal*  
 “ *God*. But, his artifice being discovered,  
 “ when it was farther requested, that he  
 “ should acknowledge him to be not only  
 “ *the son of the eternal God*, but also *the*  
 “ *eternal Son of God*, lest he should take  
 “ away from him his office of Mediator :  
 “ he chose rather to be silent, than to ren-  
 “ der to the Son of God the honour due to  
 “ him ; partly, through dismay at the hor-  
 “ ror of dying, which he had never in ear-  
 “ nest thought of before ; and in part, I  
 “ believe, from the state of stupefaction  
 “ which he was in, by the just judgment  
 “ of God.” *It would have been more natu-*  
*ral and equitable, as well as humane, to have*  
*ascribed his silence at this time, to his perse-*  
*vering integrity, and patient submission to his*  
*hard fate.* “ And shall we think that  
 “ Christ can be invoked in prayer by such  
 “ men ? It cannot be. Rather every time  
 “ they

“ they pronounce his name, he is blasphem-  
 “ ed by them ; since they do not take Christ  
 “ to be what he really is, and what he declares  
 “ himself to be in his word, but such as  
 “ they have framed him after their own  
 “ fancies ; that is, instead of the true Christ,  
 “ they obstinately cleave to an idol of their  
 “ own making. For if it were otherwise,  
 “ every heretic would justify and cover his  
 “ errors with the name of Christ, (as they  
 “ have always done) and boast that he builds  
 “ on his foundation. But this is all vain  
 “ pretence, for in rejecting the doctrine of  
 “ Christ, they disown Christ himself.”

*Thus nothing that Servetus could do was  
 right ; his very praying to Christ was blas-  
 phemy ; because he did not think and believe  
 concerning him, as Beza and the church of  
 Geneva professed to believe.*

## SECTION

## SECTION II.

*Of Mr. John Biddle, M. A. of the University of Oxford.*

AFTER a long interval, from the burning of *Wightman* at *Litchfield* in 1611, we hear of none who dared to avow and publish the dangerous doctrine of the *Divine Unity*, till the latter end of the reign of Charles I. when Mr. *John Biddle*, who had studied at *Magdalen Hall*, and distinguished himself with deserved reputation in the University of Oxford, drew the attention of many to the question concerning the “ One  
“ most high God, (as he speaks) Creator of  
“ heaven and earth; whom he maintained  
“ to be none other than the Father of our  
“ Lord Jesus Christ.”

I have elsewhere related, how narrowly he escaped being burned to death for his opinions, by the Assembly of (Presbyterian) Divines, who had then the chief hand and direction in matters of religion; and that at last



he perished in prison in 1662, when the power of the episcopal church returned. As the author of a short but valuable account of his life, informs us, (p. 4.) “ It “ was by diligently reading the holy Scrip- “ tures (for *Socinian* books he had read “ none) and fervently imploring divine il- “ lumination, that he perceived the com- “ mon doctrine concerning the holy Trinity, “ was not well grounded in revelation, much “ less in reason. And being as generous in “ speaking as free in judging, he did, as “ occasion offered, discover his reasons of “ questioning it.” And yet he was one who did not unreasonably obtrude his peculiar opinions upon others, though he omitted no fair opportunity of bearing testimony to the divine truth, either from the press, or in any other way. A proof of his modesty, as well as courage, is seen in the following instance. “ There was a considerable number of a “ congregation of those called *Anabaptists*, “ who began to entertain J. Biddle’s senti- “ ments concerning the Trinity. The pas- “ tor, one Griffin, thinking, it should seem, “ to reduce them to their former opinion, “ and to put a stop to the spreading of this  
3
gangrene,

“ gangrene, as he esteemed it, challenges  
 “ Mr. Biddle to a public disputation, at his  
 “ meeting place at St. Paul’s, upon the sub-  
 “ ject of Christ’s *supreme Deity*; which he  
 “ would have declined, as knowing Mr.  
 “ Griffin to be far inferior to him in learn-  
 “ ing, &c. but at length he accepted it.  
 “ And being met, in the midst of a numerous  
 “ auditory, among whom were not a few of  
 “ Biddle’s inveterate and fiery adversaries;  
 “ Mr. Griffin, either imprudently, or to  
 “ prejudice the hearers against his antago-  
 “ nist, or for some worse end, repeating the  
 “ question, asks; *If any man there did deny,*  
 “ *that Christ was God most high?* To which  
 “ our Biddle resolutely and conscientiously  
 “ answers; *I do deny it.* By which gene-  
 “ rous profession, he gave his adversaries  
 “ occasion of a positive and clear accusation;  
 “ which they soon laid hold of.” It gives  
 much satisfaction to find, that the Unitar-  
 ians who suffered in our own country, were  
 all of them eminent examples of piety and  
 virtue. Our Biographer well remarks, p.  
 10. “ But that which in my judgment does  
 “ more commend our John Biddle, than all  
 “ his labours and sufferings for the propa-  
 “ gation

“ gation of great and important truths, was  
 “ his great zeal for promoting holiness of  
 “ life and manners: for this was always his  
 “ end and design in what he taught. He  
 “ valued not his doctrines for speculation,  
 “ but practice; infomuch that he would  
 “ not discourse of those points wherein he  
 “ differed from others, with those that ap-  
 “ peared not religious according to their  
 “ knowlege. Neither could he bear those  
 “ that dissembled in profession for worldly  
 “ interest.—He would often tell his friends,  
 “ that no religion could benefit a bad man;  
 “ and call upon them to resolve with them-  
 “ selves, as well to profess and practice the  
 “ truth according to godliness, as to study  
 “ to find it out; and that against all terrors  
 “ and allurements to the contrary; being  
 “ assured, that nothing displeasing to al-  
 “ mighty God, could be in any wise profit-  
 “ able to them.”

I shall close this head, with one of the  
 articles of his belief; relating to *the supposed*  
*two natures in Christ*. It is in his “ Con-  
 fession of Faith touching the Holy Trinity:”  
 The TRINITY, says he in one part of it,  
 p. 10. which the apostle Peter believed,  
 (Acts



(Acts ii. 22, 23. 36.) consisteth of *God the Father, of the man Jesus Christ our Lord, and of the holy Spirit, the gift of God* through our Lord Jesus Christ."

*Article iii.*

" I believe, that Jesus Christ, to the intent he might be our brother, and have a fellow-feeling of our infirmities, and so become the more ready to help us, (the consideration whereof is the greatest encouragement to piety that can be imagined) *bath no other than a human nature*; and therefore in this very nature is not only a person, since none but a human person can be our brother; but also our Lord, yea our God."

N. B. Biddle here, in like manner as Socinus, and other Unitarians, before and since, made no scruple of calling Christ, God, although he believed him to be only a human creature, on account of *the Divine Sovereignty*, as he calls it, with which he was invested. It is in the same way that Moses, and magistrates are also called *gods* in Scripture.

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After

After this, having shewn, by a variety of Scripture proofs, that Christ had *no divine*, but *only a human nature*; was a man, and nothing else: towards the conclusion he alleges the following texts of Scripture and remarks upon them.

“ Acts x. 38. *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy Spirit, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.* Luke xxii. 48. *And there appeared an angel to him (Christ) from heaven strengthening him.* Matth. xxvii. 46. *Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying; My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?* “ What need was there, in these instances, that the *holy Spirit* should be given to Christ, to enable him to do miracles; and an *angel* appear from heaven unto him to strengthen him? or why should he so earnestly expostulate with God for *forsaking him*, if Christ were he, by whom the first creation was performed, *had a divine nature*, and was God himself? Could not he that first created the world, do miracles, without being empowered by another? Would it be said of him that  
“ had

“ had the *Divine nature*; that he did mira-  
 “ cles, because *God was with him*; and not  
 “ rather *because he was God*? Or needed  
 “ *he* in his agony to be strenghtened by an  
 “ angel? Would not the *Divine nature* in  
 “ Christ, at this rate, be in the mean time  
 “ idle and useles? Could he that was very  
 “ God himself, cry out; *My God, my God,*  
 “ *why hast thou forsaken me*? Was he his  
 “ *own God, and had forsaken himself*?

“ These things have I here set down, out  
 “ of zeal to the *true Son of God*, the man  
 “ Christ Jesus; that the adversaries may by  
 “ these means be brought to bethink them-  
 “ selves, and not substitute a *false* one in  
 “ his stead, namely, *an eternal Son begotten*  
 “ *out of the substance of God*; whereas there  
 “ is no place in the Scripture, that either  
 “ faith, or intimateth any such thing.”

“ But they will say, that if Christ were  
 “ not God, he could not satisfy for our  
 “ sins: which reason overthroweth itself,  
 “ and sheweth their opinion concerning the  
 “ Divine Nature of Christ to be fictitious.  
 “ For how can God satisfy God? Can any  
 “ one make satisfaction to himself? Neither  
 “ will it relieve them, to reply, that there



“ are *several persons in God*, and so the *se-*  
 “ *cond* satisfied the *first*. For if there be  
 “ *three* persons to whom we are indebted,  
 “ and but *one of them* satisfied, we are in as  
 “ bad a condition as before, in that we stand  
 “ in need of someone to make satisfaction to  
 “ the *second* and *third persons* in God. If they  
 “ further answer, that the *second* freely for-  
 “ giveth us: this will make *him more boun-*  
 “ *tiful* than *the first*, who would not do it  
 “ without receiving full satisfaction. But  
 “ this doctrine of *the Satisfaction* of Christ,  
 “ as well as that of his *two natures*, where-  
 “ on it is, though very ruinously, built, is  
 “ a meer device of man; for neither is it  
 “ exprest in Scripture, nor can solidly be  
 “ deduced from it.” p. 11, 12.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER V.

*Of the State of the Unitarian doctrine and worship, from the Restoration to the close of the last century.*

## SECTION I.

*Of Mr. THOMAS FIRMIN.*

THE piety and superior virtue of *Thomas Firmin*, citizen of London, are well known to all who are acquainted with the history of the *Unitarians* in England after the Restoration; or who have perused his life, written in a homely stile, but stored with facts, that bespeak an active benevolence and unwearied exertions to serve mankind, which few have equalled in any age. As he was the disciple of Mr. *Biddle*, and befriended him living, he was strenuous in

supporting the cause of the Divine Unity, in which he had stood forth so nobly, after his decease. Bishop *Burnet*'s account of him may be inserted here, as it justifies our giving him a place, as a Reviver of the doctrine of the Divine Unity, though speaking of his death, it may be thought to come in somewhat prematurely.

“ This year, 1698, (says he) Thomas Firmin, a famous citizen of London, died. He was in great esteem for promoting many charitable designs, for looking after the poor of the city and setting them to work ; for raising great sums for schools and hospitals, and indeed, for charities of all sorts, private and public. He had such credit with the richest citizens, that he had the command of great wealth as oft as there was occasion for it ; and he laid out his own time chiefly (it should have been added *his fortunes* also) in advancing all such designs. These things gained him a great reputation. He was called a *Socinian*, but he was really (*k*) an *Arian* ;

(*k*) “ *Burnet's History of his own Time*, Vol. iii. 8vo. p. 292. It must have been owing to great inattention, that the Bishop pronounces him so positively to have been an *Arian* ; when the author of “ *An Account of Mr. Firmin's*



*an*: which he very freely owned, before the Revolution; but he gave no *public* vent to it, as he did afterwards. He studied to promote his opinions, after the Revolution, with much heat. Many books were printed against the Trinity, which he dispersed over the nation, distributing them freely to all who would accept of them."

But a zealous Unitarian as Mr. Firmin was, it must be owned, what has before been observed concerning *Socinus*, and those properly called *Socinians*, that he much diserved the cause he had at heart, by his own contradictory and inconsistent conduct, at least what appeared so to others; because professing to believe the Father of Christ, and of mankind, to be the only true God, he continued to frequent those christian assemblies, where two other persons, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, were each of them prayed unto severally, and worshiped together with the supreme Father of all.

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It

Firmin's religion," printed in 1698, says, p. 4. that he embraced the opinions of Mr. J. Biddle; who in an article of his belief above cited, declares his persuasion, that *Christ had no other than a human nature.*

It is probable that Mr. Firmin, being originally a member of the church of England, a separation from it did not at first occur to him, as he had a method of reconciling to his own mind the exceptionable passages in its public service; and there was no society of christians then, whose principles in this respect were less exceptionable to him, especially after his friend Mr. Bid-  
dle had perished in prison. Being also settled in a part of the city of London where he had an opportunity of being a hearer of, and of contracting an acquaintance, and cultivating even an intimacy with some of those moderate *latitudinarian* Divines, as they were called, *Owtram*, (1) *Whichcot*, *Tillotson*, *Fowler*, &c. this may have contributed the more to silence his scruples, and to reconcile him to a continuance in that communion, that he might not be deprived of the advantage of the public instructions of those  
shining

(1) I have not observed in Dr. Whichcot's writings, any language concerning God and Christ, but such as is intirely Scriptural, and in which an Unitarian might heartily join. This is particularly observable in that fine prayer, which he was wont to use in the pulpit, and which is preserved in his works.

shining lights, and eminent preachers of christian virtue, who still live, and speak in their writings.

The idea and plan on which Mr. Firmin and other Unitarians, his friends, defended their joining in Trinitarian forms of worship; and with which they came forth in print, upon the controversy about the Trinity betwixt Dr. Sherlock and his opponent Dr. South, and others, was by seizing and adopting the explications of the latter, who were called Nominalists, i. e. *nominal* Trinitarians, because they asserted that *their Trinity* was not the same with that of Dean Sherlock, did not consist of *three divine persons* who were *three real beings, three infinite minds*, as the Doctor maintained; but was only *three properties* of the Deity, *three internal relations or respects* of the INFINITE MIND to itself,

Hence when Mr. Firmin was reproached, as he frequently was, with his inconsistency in paying divine honours to a creature, in worshiping Christ, whom he believed to be one of the human race, distinguished indeed from other men by divine extraordinary gifts, but who had no existence before  
he



he had his birth in Judea, in the manner in which we lately saw Abp. Tillotson point his arguments argainst him and others; he defended himself by alleging, that although Christ was a man, he was nevertheless God (*m*) in respect of God *in him*, *dwelling in him*, and *being with him*, by those continual extraordinary communications and powers vouchsafed to him; and that the holy Spirit, being nothing else but the divine power or influence, by which Christ and his apostles were actuated and led, might also not improperly be stiled God, as the power of God is God himself. So that *his Trinity*, was the one true God in a threefold view of him; (1.) as the prime soveraign agent, and author of all things; (2.) as manifesting himself by Christ; and (3.) also by his holy spirit, or extraordinary power in the establishment and propagation of the gospel.

No one can justly question Mr. Firmin's sincerity and integrity, as we have all reason to believe, that in this as well as every im-

(*m*) See "An Account of Mr. Firmin's Religion," p. 18.

portant concern of his life, he acted from the purest motives; yet we cannot but lament, that he should have seen the thing in such a light, and been the cause of misleading many then and afterwards, by giving them a handle and encouragement, to look upon the *Trinitarian* worship of the church of England as *Unitarian* or *Socinian*, and conform to it as such.

He and his friends however appear to have entertained a suspicion, that this way of acting was not quite right, by their advancing an apology for it, which looks too artificial, and will not bear examination. For they alleged, that the words used by them on this subject, were to be construed into a sense by themselves, such as can be applied to God only, and not to created beings. Says one of them (*b*), “ by this form of prayer, *O God the Father, have mercy upon us; O God the Son have mercy upon us; O God the holy ghost, have mercy upon us* : the church only means

(*b*) “ Judgment of a disinterested Person, concerning the controversy between Dr. South, and Dr. Sherlock, p. 29. By a Divine of the church of England.” London printed, 1696; and referred to in “ An Account of Mr. Firmin’s religion,” p. 18.

to invoke God by the *three distinctions* which she owneth to be in him. And when she names those *distinctions* or *properties*, *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*; she intends those words, *not as when they are used of men, or of any other creatures; but only in the sense that they are applicable to God. Father*, when said of God, is *original intellect*, or *mind*; *Son* is *reflex wisdom*, and *Holy Spirit* is *Divine Love*."

All this might have passed without blame, if it had been a matter universally known, acknowledged, and acquiesced in, to put such a meaning and construction upon words used in acts of public devotion; so as to make *three different and distinct addresses to God the Father, to God the Son, and to God the Holy Ghost, to be an address to, and invocation of One God only*. But when by far the greater part considered these phrases and addresses in their plain natural sense, as devout applications to *three different and distinct persons, three several intelligent agents*, according to the way in which they use the like terms, in the common transactions of life: it had not a good aspect for the worshippers of the one true God, the Father of Christ,



Christ and of mankind, to unite with such persons in their devotions; and must have much diminished the good effect of their testimony which they might bear in their writings, or in any other way, to the doctrine of the Divine Unity; and make others not pay a proper attention even to the most powerful evidence they might produce for it. For although learned and ingenious speculatists, may satisfy themselves with refining upon and interpreting away the just and proper and acknowledged general meaning of words, the common understanding of mankind will hardly ever be reconciled to such artificial practice: but where they see persons offering prayer severally, to God the Father, to God the Son, and to God the Holy Ghost, will consider them as praying to three different Beings; as worshipping three distinct objects of worship.

There was an attack made on Mr. Firmin's reputation soon after his death, by a violently orthodox preacher of those days, in the city, who "accused him of changing sides in his religion, when he was in danger of being called to martyrdom for it,"

“ it,” (*n*) alluding to the abovementioned public profession of his agreement with the church of England, and approbation of its Trinitarian worship, by putting his own sense upon it; and intimating, as if he had thereby escaped some persecution.

But this seems to have been pure surmise and slander on the part of his accuser: although one is sorry that there should have been any thing in Mr. Firmin’s conduct to give a plausible colour to the charge of his being a temporizer in matters of religion. We find indeed the Dissenters, a little before Mr. Firmin’s death, in the year 1697, in the address of their body to King William, by Dr. Bates, very inconsiderately beseeching him to shut the press against the Unitarians; wherein they had chiefly in view the Tracts written by Mr. Firmin’s friends, patronized and circulated by him. But the king (*o*), as one well observes upon the occasion,

(*n*) See “ A Vindication of the late excellent and charitable Mr. Thomas Firmin, from the injurious reflections of Mr. Luke Milbourn, in his Sermon before the court of Aldermen at St. Paul’s church; Aug. 28, 1698. p. 34.”

(*o*) “ Emlyn’s Works, Vol. ii. p. 374.

caſion, *was not willing to be made a perſecutor.* It muſt not however be omitted, that this great prince, about this time, ſuffered himſelf to be prevailed (*p*) upon to paſs an *Act,*

(*p*) That the King yielded to it with reluctance, and through the neceſſity of the times, will appear moſt probable from the following fact; which is greatly to his honour. “ The Scottiſh Commiſſioners who came up to “ make a tender of their Crown (Anno 1689,) to K. “ William, (and who were, the Earl of Argyle for the “ Lords, Sir James Montgomery for the Knights, and “ Sir John Dalrymple for the Boroughs) being introduced to their Majeſties at Whitehall, preſented firſt a “ preparatory Letter from the Eſtates, then the Inſtrument of Government, with a paper containing a Recital of the Grievances of the Nation; and an Addreſs deſiring his Majeſty to convert the Convention into a “ Parliament. The King having graciously promiſed to “ concur with them in all juſt meaſures for the intereſt “ of the Kingdom, the Coronation-oath was tendered to “ their Majeſties by the Earl Argyle. As it contained “ a Clauſe importing, that *they ſhould root out hereſy,* the “ King declared, that he did not mean by theſe words, “ that he ſhould be under an obligation *to act as a Perſecutor.* The Commiſſioners replying, that ſuch was “ not the *Meaning* or Import of the Oath, he deſired “ *them,* and others preſent, *to bear witneſs to the Exception he had made.*”——Smollet’s *History of England,* Vol. viii. p. 319.

*Burnet,*



*Act*, that bore very hard upon all such christians as Mr. Firmin; though we do not find that any were brought into trouble from it at that time. As this *Act* so immediately belongs to the subject I am treating upon, it will be proper to lay it before my reader with some remarks.

*Statute 8 and 9 William III.*

By Statute 8 and 9 William III. c. 32. intituled, "An Act for the more effectual suppressing of Blasphemy and Profaneness," it is enacted, "That if any Person having  
 " been educated in, or at any Time having  
 " made Profession of the Christian Religion,  
 " within this Realm, shall by Writing,  
 " Printing, Teaching, or advised Speaking,  
 " deny any one (*P*) of the Persons of the  
 " Holy

*Burnet*, in his History of his own time, thus expresses it more briefly: "When the King and Queen took the oaths, the king explained one word in the oath, by which he was bound to *repress heresies*; that he did not by this bind himself to *persecute any for their conscience*."

(*P*) The Long Parliament in 1648, by the influence of the Presbyterians, passed an Act similar to this, but  
 with

“ Holy Trinity to be God, or shall assert  
 “ or maintain there are more Gods than  
 “ one, or shall deny the Christian Religion  
 “ to be true, or the Holy Scriptures of the  
 “ Old and New Testament to be of Divine  
 “ Authority, and shall ——— be thereof  
 “ lawfully convicted by the Oath of two or  
 “ more credible Witnesses ; such Person for  
 “ the

with the severer penalty of death to be inflicted on the  
 party condemned : though indeed three years imprisonment  
 is sometimes worse than death. The part in it relating to  
 the Trinity, is as follows : “ For the preventing of the  
 “ growth and spreading of *heresy* and *blasphemy*, be it  
 “ ordained by the lords and commons in this present par-  
 “ liament assembled : That all such persons as shall from  
 “ and after the date of this present ordinance, willingly,  
 “ by preaching, teaching, printing, or writing, maintain  
 “ and publish——*that the Father is not God, the Son is*  
 “ *not God, or that the Holy Ghost is not God ; or that they*  
 “ *three are not one eternal God ; or that shall in like man-*  
 “ *ner maintain and publish, that Christ is not God equal*  
 “ *with the Father ; or shall deny the manhood of Christ ;*  
 “ *or that the Godhead and manhood of Christ are several*  
 “ *natures*——all such maintaining and publishing of  
 “ such error or errors, with obstinacy therein ; shall by  
 “ virtue hereof be adjudged felony : and all such persons  
 “ upon complaint and proof made of the same, in any of  
 “ the cases aforesaid——the said party so accused, shall  
 “ be by the said justices of the peace committed to prison  
 “ ———and in case the indictment be found, and the

“ the first Offence shall be adjudged inca-  
 “ pable and disabled in Law to have and  
 “ enjoy any Office or Employment Ecclesi-  
 “ astical, Civil or Military: And if such  
 “ Person shall be a second time lawfully  
 “ convicted as aforesaid of all or any of the  
 “ aforesaid crime or crimes, that then he  
 “ shall from thenceforth be disabled to sue,  
 “ prosecute, plead, or use any Action or  
 “ Information, or to be Guardian of any  
 “ child, or Executor or Administrator of  
 “ any Person, or capable of any Legacy, or  
 “ Deed of Gift, or to bear any Office, Civil  
 “ or Military, or Benefice Ecclesiastical for  
 “ ever within this Realm, and shall also  
 “ suffer Imprisonment for the space of three  
 “ Years, without Bail or Mainprize, from  
 “ the time of such Conviction.”

*Remarks*

“ party upon his trial shall not abjure his said error, and  
 “ defence and maintenance of the same, he shall suffer  
 “ the pains of death, as in case of felony, without benefit  
 “ of clergy.”

“ An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons assem-  
 “ bled in Parliament, for punishing Blasphemies  
 “ and Heresies.”—London, printed for Edward  
 Husband, Printer to the honourable house of  
 Commons. 1648.



*Remarks on this Act.*

1. If we consider the disposition of the two houses of Parliament at this juncture, and their sincere endeavours to discourage vice and immorality, as well as what they call prophaneness, we cannot doubt but that this Act was made by them with a pious and good intent. This is seen in the following extract from the Commons Address, presented to the King by the whole house, Feb. 17, 1698, previous to their passing the Bill in question.

(o) “ Therefore in Concurrence with your Majesty’s pious intentions, we do most humbly desire, that your Majesty would issue out your Royal Proclamation, commanding all your Majesty’s Judges, Justices of the Peace, and other Magistrates, to put in speedy Execution those good Laws that are now in force against Prophaneness and Immorality, and give due Encouragement to all such as do their Duty therein. And that

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your

(o) See “ The History and Proceedings of the House of Commons, from the Restoration to the present time.” Vol. III. p. 81, 82. London, printed for R. Chandler. 1742.

your Majesty would be pleased to require from your Judges and Justices of Assize, from time to time, an Account of such their Proceedings."

" And since the Examples of Men in high and public Stations have a powerful Influence upon the Lives of others, we do most humbly beseech your Majesty, that all Vice, Prophaneness, and Irreligion, may in a particular manner be discouraged, in those who have the Honour to be employed near your Royal Person; and in all others who are in your Majesty's Service, by Sea and Land; appointing strict orders to be given to all your Commanders, that they do not only shew a good Example themselves, but also inspect the Manners of those under them; and that your Majesty would upon all occasions distinguish Men of Piety and Virtue, by Marks of your Royal Favour."

" We do further in all Humility beseech your Majesty, that your Majesty would give such effectual Orders, as to your Royal Wisdom shall seem fit, for the suppressing all pernicious Books and Pamphlets, which contain in them impious Doctrines against the Holy Trinity, and other Fundamental

Articles of our Faith, tending to the subversion of the Christian Religion, and that the Authors and Publishers thereof may be discountenanced and punished."

2. In the last clause of this Address, which contains the substance of the above-cited Act of Parliament, there are some things which the better knowlege and liberality of the present times would be far from approving.

For in condemning those writings which tended to prove the doctrine of the Trinity to be without foundation in the Scriptures, or any others relating to the gospel, as *impious*; and calling for the authors and publishers of them to be punished, the Commons of Great-Britain assumed a province which did not belong to them. For the civil magistrate, in this or in any country, has no right to interfere in directing and controuling men's religious opinions, or in punishing them for uttering and endeavouring to propagate them. In this respect we are responsible to God only, and not to our fellow men; whatever be their degree or station.

If a man, under the cloak and pretence of religion, does any thing to wound another's



good name, or which is in any way injurious to him, the magistrate very properly interposes to prevent and remedy such evils. But he takes cognisance thereof, not as a matter of religion, but of civil policy : as what regards men's temporal rights and security, not as affecting their future happiness and God's favour, with which he has nothing to do, unless in the way of offering friendly counsel and assistance, as any private person may do ; and nothing farther.

Put the case, that at that time the great Senate of the nation had been composed of those christians called *Arians*, as were many whole nations formerly, and a large part of the learned and upper ranks of our own have been reckoned, since the publication of Dr. *Clarke's* writings. If such an *Arian* Parliament had in their turn passed a contrary Act in 1698, to *suppress all books as pernicious and containing impious doctrine*, which were written in defence of the Trinity, and had therein inflicted various punishments on all who stood up for and openly maintained it : Those *Trinitarians* or *Athanasians* who at that period promoted this Act for silencing and imprisoning unitarian christians,

christians, would in their turn have been ready, and most justly, to cry out against such cruel oppression and stopping of free inquiry into the Scriptures, and hindering persons from professing and publishing what they were there taught. And what would have been wrong and unjust in *Arians* to have done to them, could not be right for them to do to other christians.

3. The Commons house of Parliament were at full liberty, *each man for himself*, to declare what doctrines seemed to him to be subversive of the christian religion, the denial or belief of the Holy Trinity, or any other. But in their *legislative capacity*, they were intirely out of their line, and went beyond their province, in making any declarations of the kind, to bind and affect others in any shape or degree. When the freemen of England chuse their representatives in the Senate, they do not invest them with a power to take care of their souls, to chuse their religion for them, to make articles of faith for or against the Trinity, or the like: to which if they do not yield assent, they are to be fined and imprisoned. No man *can* give such a power to another. And I ap-

prehend no man intends to do it in the present instance. If therefore any permanent Acts subsist, of such a power unjustly assumed, likely to affect the reputation, the property, the liberty of unoffending, innocent, praise-worthy citizens, such Act or Acts cannot be too soon repealed and removed.

4. The title of this Statute will be far from being approved by any, who examine it coolly, and without prejudice; *viz.*

*An Act for the more effectual Suppression of Blasphemy and Prophaneness.*

From such a title one would expect that the persons against whom it was made, had been guilty of some great wickedness, some daring outrage and insult on every thing sacred, that tended to bring God and all true religion into contempt.

But with what truth or justice can this be imputed to persons of the following description; *viz.* “ who deny any one of the  
 “ Persons of the Holy Trinity to be God ;  
 “ who assert and maintain that there are  
 “ more Gods than one ; or who deny the  
 “ christian religion to be true, or the Holy  
 “ Scriptures



“ Scriptures of the Old and New Testament  
 “ to be of Divine Authority.”

It is perverting the judgments of men, and misleading them in what is of the first importance, to make these things *crimes*, as they are afterwards repeatedly called, *which are no crimes*; which on the contrary may be, and often are laudable actions, and marks of true virtue and integrity.

For supposing it was ever so true, that *there are Three Divine Persons, who are each of them God, and yet that these Three Divine Persons are but One God*; it can be no crime for a christian to profess not to believe it; if he does not see evidence for it in the holy Scriptures. And in such case to profess his disbelief of it, and assign his reasons, can have nothing wrong in it; nay may oftentimes, and even generally, be his duty. And if on the other hand, an honest, simple-minded christian, perplexed with the intricate disputes and assertions of learned men, on this topic; of there being Three Divine Persons who are each of them God; should not be able to comprehend them in any other way, but that there are three Gods; he is to  
 be

be pitied for it: but surely there can be nothing in it that is criminal.

Neither have we, on the other hand, any grounds to say, that in deserting and giving up the christian religion, and denying it to be true, a man is guilty of a crime, for which he is to be arraigned and condemned by any human judicature. May we not rather say, that a person may labour under such invincible prejudices: things may have been so misrepresented to him: he may see the historical facts of the Old and New Testament in such false lights, and be such a stranger to that weight of collateral evidence which there is for them: he may have been taught to view even the morality of the gospel through such wrong mediums, that he may be equally sincere and upright in denying, as others are in believing the divine revelations in the Bible. And better and more honourable were it surely for such an one, fairly and openly to renounce the gospel, and to declare his reasons for his Disbelief of it, if he thinks proper; rather than hurt the integrity of his own mind, by making an outward profession of what he secretly disapproves and condemns.

This

This giving of ill names to such as disbelieve the doctrine of the Trinity, or who reject Revelation intirely, and representing them as bad men, and criminal on that account, and unfit to discharge the common duties of life, is of very pernicious consequence; as it tends to inspire men with a dislike, and sometimes with a detestation, of the best and worthiest of mankind.

Dr. Clarke, Rector of St. James's, so often named by me with respect, rendered great service to the christian world by his laborious search into the holy Scriptures; and by bringing and classing together, in a clear and distinct method, every thing that related to the doctrine of the Trinity; thereby furnishing every one with the means of settling their opinions upon a subject, which is wholly matter of divine revelation, and only to be learned from the Bible.

After all his labours and studies, he came to this determination concerning the *One true God*, very different from the doctrine supposed and referred to in this Act of (*p*) Parlia-

(*p*) The first of the thirty nine Articles of the Church of England is, "*Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.*"

"There



Parliament, which is put in the margin ; and with a true christian courage published his sentiments.

(q) “ There is (says Dr. Clarke) *One*  
 “ Supreme Cause and Original of things ;  
 “ *One* simple, uncompounded, undivided,  
 “ *intelligent Agent* or *Person* ; who is the  
 “ Alone Author of all Being, and the Foun-  
 “ tain of all Power.”

“ The *Father Alone*, is, in the highest,  
 “ strict, proper, and absolute sense, *Supreme*  
 “ *over all*.”

“ The *Father Alone*, is, absolutely speak-  
 “ ing, the *God of the Universe* ; the *God of*  
 “ *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* ; the *God of*  
 “ *Israel* ; of *Moses*, of the *Prophets* and  
 “ *Apostles* ; and the *God and Father of our*  
 “ *Lord Jesus Christ*.”

“ The Scripture, when it mentions the  
 “ *One God*, or the *only God*, always means  
 “ the Supreme Person *of the Father*.”

“ When

“ There is but one living and true God, everlasting,  
 “ without Body, Parts, or Passions ; of infinite Power,  
 “ Wisdom, and Goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all  
 “ Things both visible and invisible ; and in *Unity of this*  
 “ *Godhead there be three Persons, of one Substance, Power,*  
 “ *and Eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*.”

(q) “ Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity,” p. 233, &c.

“ When the word, God, is mentioned in  
 “ Scripture, with any High *Epithet*, *Title*,  
 “ or *Attribute* annexed to it ; it generally,  
 “ (I think, *always*) means the *Person of the*  
 “ *Father.*”

“ The Scripture, when it mentions God,  
 “ absolutely and by way of Eminence, *al-*  
 “ *ways* means the *Person of the Father.*”

The late Dr. Lardner, after a life of labour and study, protracted to a much longer period than Dr. Clarke's, with full vigour of judgment to the last, and after an indefatigable inquiry into the Scriptures, and all the writings of christian antiquity, of which he has left the most noble monuments behind him ; not only agreed with Dr. Clarke in the above propositions, that *the Father Alone is the God of the Universe, the only true God* : but found cause to recede farther from the doctrine of the Trinity commonly received ; maintaining that the *Spirit*, or *Holy Spirit*, was not *a Person, a distinct intelligent Agent*, but only *the power, the influence, or energy* of God ; and also, that our Lord Jesus Christ was one of the human race, who had no existence before he was born at Bethlehem. This description of the  
 Person

Person of Christ he proved to be just and exact, by an appeal to the Scriptures, to the constant uniform declarations of Christ concerning himself, and of his apostles concerning him, shewing also how those few passages of Scripture might better be interpreted, which had misled Dr. Clarke and others.

Could it now, I ask, with any degree of truth, be called *blasphemy* or *prophaneness*, in these two men of known piety, after a diligent study of the sacred writings, thus to publish what they there learned, concerning the true God and object of their religious regards? Was it not their duty, is it not the duty of every man, to impart useful knowlege to others, especially such as may minister to their present comfort and future happiness? And the right knowlege of God will certainly serve these great ends.

Were such characters of spotless virtue and integrity from the earliest youth, who spent their lives in unambitious pursuit of the most important truths, and who courageously ventured to publish them for the common benefit, therein chusing to obey God, rather than man? Or any equally honest men and good citizens now, who assert and  
propagate



propagate such doctrines, to be held criminals for this in the eye of the law, *to be thenceforth disabled to sue, prosecute, plead, or use any Action or Information* for the maintenance or recovery of their just rights; *or to be Guardian of any Child, or Executor or Administrator of any Person, or capable of any Legacy or Deed of Gift, or to bear any Office Civil or Military, or Benefice Ecclesiastical for ever, within this Realm, to be condemned also to suffer imprisonment for the Space of three Years?*

Surely what might be well intended, but was ill understood at the time; and *what is in itself against all right and justice; what is directly contrary to the doctrine of Christ, and is of most fatal consequence; should be corrected: and laws not be suffered to remain, which serve to encourage men's worst passions, and excite them to hate, persecute, and destroy their fellow-citizens for their very virtues.*

But to return to and finish the subject in hand.——It happened, as might well be expected, that by Mr. *Firmin* and his friends mixing themselves in the crowd with the  
 worshippers

worshippers of the Trinity, their testimony to the Unity of God, if not intirely lost, became of little value, and unheeded. Nor indeed could it well be otherwise. For when he and other Unitarians could quiet their scruples, and be easy in joining uniformly in the stated worship and invocation of Three several Divine Persons, and consider it all the while as the worship of One God, they could have no plea or title to object to, or complain of it, as a wrong or false worship; and others would naturally infer their full approbation of it from their practice.

Of this he became sensible towards the latter end of his life; and was fearful that in consequence of such universal conformity to *Trinitarian* forms of worship, *Polytheism* would be so far encouraged, that the true idea of God would be lost among christians. He therefore, (r) as was mentioned formerly, intended to form separate societies or congregations of christians, in which the Unity of God, as delivered in the Scriptures, without any Trinity, should be acknowledged, and the worship of the *Person of the Father*, the only

(r) Apology for resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, p. 96.

only true God, alone take place, without the admission of the worship of any other Person whatsoever. For he found, (as the author of "An Account of Mr. Firmin's Religion," p. 49, speaks) that although he and other Unitarian Christians, were able to put their own construction upon "the unscriptural terms, *Trinity, Three Divine Persons*, and the like; yet *taken in the sense they bear in common familiar speech*, in which sense the greater number of men, almost all the unlearned, must needs understand them, they *imply a more gross and absurd polytheism* than any of the old heathens were guilty of. He that understands Three Divine Persons to be Three distinct, infinite, all perfect Spirits or Beings or Minds, three Creators, three several Objects of worship, is more guilty of Polytheism, than the Greeks and Romans ever were, before their conversion to christianity. For although they and other nations were heathens, that is polytheists, asserters of many gods, yet they never believed more than one infinite all-perfect Spirit, the Father and King of the lesser Deities."



Had Mr. Firmin lived to realize his plan, it might, as far as we can judge, have been a means of advancing the true knowledge and worship of God. For had he formed and established such societies of Unitarian Christians in the metropolis, and had others come forth in like manner after his example in other parts of the kingdom, it might have produced lasting good effects, from that esteem and honour in which he was held by many of the Great and Good of the nation, as well as by the lower classes of our fellow-citizens who continually felt and experienced his kind and benevolent attention to them; and we might have reaped and enjoyed the happy consequences of it in this our day, in the establishment of many professedly Unitarian churches of christians throughout the nation. A fairer testimony to his superior merit could not readily be devised, than is conveyed by the following Inscription, which I presume still remains, on a pillar, in the garden of a respectable family at Marden in Surrey; and will always be a far nobler ornament to their place and name, than the most finished column of Grecian sculpture.

(s) To perpetuate as far as marble and love can do it, the memory of THOMAS FIRMIN, citizen of *London*.

*None ever passed the several periods of human life more irreproachably, or performed the common duties of society with greater sincerity and approbation. Though it appears, by his public spirit, that he thought himself born rather for the benefit of others, than his own private advantage; yet the satisfaction of doing good, and the universal esteem of honest men, made him the happiest person in the world. But his Charity, which was not confined to any nation, sect, or party, is most worthy thy imitation, at least in some degree, O Reader. He was as liberal of his own, as faithful in distributing the pious donations of others, whom he successfully persuaded to relieve the distressed, particularly the laborious poor; for of vagrant, idle, or insolent beggars, he was no advocate nor encourager. His agreeable temper rendering him an extraordinary lover of gardens, he contrived this Walk, which bears his name, and where his improv-*

Y 2 ing

(s) "Life of Mr. Thomas Firmin," p. 86.

*ing conversation and example are still remembered. But since Heaven has better disposed of him, this Pillar is erected to Charity and Friendship by Sir Robert Clayton and Martha his lady, who first builded and planted in Marden.*

Mr. Firmin died December 20, 1697, in the 66th year of his age. (t) As he had often signified his desire of being deposited at his death in *Christ Church Hospital*, the care of which had been so much upon his heart while living, his relations interred him there in the cloysters on the south side, and placed in the wall adjoining a marble monument with an Inscription, which is now through length of time and neglect become hardly legible. Though it be but coarsely drawn by an ordinary hand, the materials of it are so good, and the subject of it so worthy to be held forth to all, that I hope the Governors of that most useful charity will be mindful to repair and restore it; that it may excite the youth of the place, and some curious passenger now and then, to the like eminent virtue.

(t) Ibid. p. 89.



## CHAPTER VI.

*Of the State of the Unitarian Doctrine and  
Worship, in the present century.*

### SECTION I.

*Of Mr. Emlyn.*

**I** Have always reckoned the public prosecution of that learned and excellent person, our countryman, Mr. Thomas Emlyn, for maintaining the cause of the *Divine Unity*, carried on by the Dissenters, and abetted by the Bishops (a) in Ireland, the long imprisonment

(a) “ Several Bishops, especially the Archbishops of  
“ *Armagh* and *Dublin*, (Dr. *Narcissus Marsh*, and Dr.  
“ *William King*) were not wanting to give all the en-  
“ couragement they could to the prosecution; and the

prisonment and hardships which he endured on that account, in the beginning of the present century, and his bold and well supported testimony to that great truth, by his valuable publications for a series of years afterwards in this city, to which he retired after his liberty was procured, together with the esteem and reverence in which he was very generally held; to have been among the

“ more to animate the proceedings, came themselves to  
 “ the trial, as if the cause of the church (so oft made a  
 “ stalking-horse to deceive the vulgar) was at stake. To  
 “ this appearance of the Bishops, I, in a good measure,  
 “ impute the arbitrary and illegal behaviour of the Lord  
 “ Chief Justice *Pine*, who, by some letters I have seen,  
 “ was a man inclined to moderation, and so professed  
 “ himself, when among his friends on this side the water;  
 “ but he perceived he was doing what was acceptable to  
 “ the governing ecclesiastics; and that, probably, induced  
 “ him to break through the bounds of law and justice, to  
 “ gratify those fiery zealots. For as Sir *Richard Levins*  
 “ told our author before the trial; it was a thing resolved  
 “ on, *to run him down like a wolf, without law or game*;  
 “ and this too plainly appeared by what followed, in that  
 “ they did not observe the rules of natural justice required  
 “ in all courts and proceedings, nor the rules of evidence  
 “ as to the fact, nor the rules of law as to the adjudica-  
 “ tion of the crime, nor legal measures in the sentence.”

“ *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Thomas Emlyn*, by  
 “ his son *Sollom Emlyn*, Esq; p. xxviii.”

the things that made an opening for and greatly contributed to that light and freedom in this respect, which we now enjoy.

The great notoriety of that unjust and illegal transaction, and the heavy sentence that was passed upon him, how much it was disliked by good men here, and excited them to plead against superstition, and for a free toleration, appears from a part of that justly admired “Dedication to Pope Clement XI.” prefixed to Sir Richard Steele’s “Account of the State of the Roman Catholic Religion throughout the World,” which was written by Doctor afterwards Bishop Hoadly, but not thought proper or prudent at the time to have published in his own name. It was first printed in the year 1715.

“Sometimes *We* of the Established Church (says he) can manage a *prosecution* (for I must not call it a *persecution*) ourselves, without calling in any other help. But I must do the *Dissenting Protestants* the justice to say, that they have shewn themselves, upon occasion, very ready to assist us in so pious and christian a work, as bringing hereticks to their right mind: being themselves but very lately come from experiencing the convin-



cing and enlightening faculty of a dungeon, or a fine. The difference between these two sorts of persons, is this. The one differ from us about ceremonies of worship, and government; but they boggle not at all at the doctrine settled for us by our first Reformers: it is all with them right and good, just as Christ left it at first; and *Calvin* found it, about fifteen hundred years afterwards. The others, unhappy men, look upon this to be straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel. However, the former sort having a toleration for their own way upon subscribing all our doctrines, can the more easily come to persuade themselves, that the christian world is unhinged, if the latter should be tolerated in their opposition to doctrines *which have been called fundamentals*, even by protestants, for so many years."

" This hath been experienced particularly in *Ireland*, by (*b*) *One*, who could not see exactly what they saw, about the nature of Christ before his appearance in this world. For, as with *you*, a man had better blaspheme Almighty God, than not magnify the *Blessed Virgin* ;

(*b*) The Rev. Mr. Emlyn. See his Tracts.

*Virgin ; so, with many of us, it is much more innocent and less hazardous to take from the glory of the Father, than of his Son. Nay, to bring down the Father to a level with his own Son, is a commendable work ; and the applauded labour of many learned men of leisure. But, to place the Son below his own Father, in any degree of real perfection, this is an unpardonable error ; so unpardonable, that all hands were united against that unhappy man. And he found at length that he had much better have violated all God's commandments, than have interpreted some passages of Scripture differently from his brethren. The Nonconformists accused him ; the Conformists condemned him ; the Secular power was called in ; and the cause ended in an imprisonment, and a very great fine : two methods of conviction, about which the gospel is silent.” (c)*

About four years after this publication of Dr. Hoadly's, and not more than fifteen from Mr. Emlyn's releasement out of prison, in “ A Narrative of the Proceedings against him,” drawn up by himself in a true christian spirit,

spirit, one has great satisfaction in seeing him quite revived with the prospect of having been of some service to the cause of the One true God and Father of all, by his sufferings for it. With what he says there on the subject, which falls so exactly within my own design, I shall conclude *this* article; recommending it as a sample of his spirit and temper; and leaving the reader for the rest, to his works; which, now that the turn is more among us for these important subjects, than has been for the last forty years, will soon become scarce, as they are in themselves invaluable.

“ It is a further ground of rejoicing, to see the light of important truth breaking forth in many other parts, and spreading abroad its *beautiful ray*; that God has raised up divers others, bold enough to profess it, and able enough, with his assistance, to defend it; I mean with weapons of a spiritual warfare, against those whose great confidence and dexterity are in those which are carnal. And though it has been my great *gravamen* and misery to be laid by in silence; so that I have been sometimes ready to lament myself as an *unprofitable servant*, turned out of  
his



his master's service : yet if I have contributed any thing to retrieve the injured honour of the peerless majesty of the One God and Father of our Lord Jesus ; whom to be like to, was the great glory of our Lord Jesus ; and if the things which have happened to me, have fallen out *rather to the the furtherance of the gospel*, I shall not think myself to have been wholly useless. For though I shall ever prefer the interest of serious piety, charity, and practical holiness, to any barren speculations : and had rather a man should love our Lord Jesus in sincerity, than barely think of him just as I do : yet if I have also served the cause of his truth, it may be 'tis beyond what I could have done, by teaching men only what others would have taught them ; because there will never be men wanting to take that office, while fewer will take the part I have borne, to the hazard of all that the world counts dear and pleasant. However, as matters were, I had no room for an innocent choice, nor any other part but this left me ; being judged unworthy, and made incapable, of all the rest. Yet during my confinement in the *Marshalsea*, as I suffered on account of religion, so I continued to  
preach

preach there. I had hired a pretty large room to myself, whither on the *Lord's days* resorted some of the *imprisoned Debtors*; and from without doors came several of the lower sort of my former people and usual hearers, who would not wholly forsake me, nor refuse to worship God with me: which was a great pleasure in my condition. And if, in the whole, I may but approve myself to my great *judge*, and giver of the prize; I am not anxious about the applause or censures of the spectators, who shall be judged also." (d)

*Thomas Emlyn.*

*London.* Sept. 1718.

## S E C T I O N II.

Of Mr. *William Whiston*.

AFTER Mr. *Emlyn*, came forth in aid of the same great cause, a fellow-sufferer also for it, and of the like fearless integrity, the learned and pious Mr. *Whiston*.  
Deprived

(d) "A Narrative of the Proceedings against Mr. *Emlyn*. P. 43, 44."

Deprived of his Mathematic Professorship, and expelled from the University of Cambridge, for maintaining the doctrine of the *Divine Unity*, he was not deterred by his sufferings, nor the difficulties to which he was reduced in providing for himself and a family ; but, for full fifty years afterwards, went on to the end of a very long life, holding forth and calling upon christians every where to attend and know, that *there was no other God but one, who was the Father of Christ and of all other creatures* ; witnessing this great Truth, in all companies, in season and out of season, in the most familiar manner ; by his writings, by his conversation, by his reproofs (where he believed them necessary) of many in high rank in the state, as well as of Ecclesiastics of all degrees. So that to his efforts, together with Dr. *Clarké's* writings, may be attributed the prevalence for a long time of what is commonly called the *Arian* doctrine concerning Christ, both with the clergy and laity of the established church, and among those who dissent from it ; till within some few years past, when what is called *Socinianism*, has been sensibly gaining ground.

I have



I have formerly spoken particularly of this excellent man, and shall have occasion to name him again. One thing I cannot help adding here; that his genuine piety, firm and unshaken trust in divine providence, and the happy cheerfulness of his spirit, could not fail of recommending both him and his doctrine; of which we meet with many pleasing specimens, in the Memoirs of himself, written when he was fourscore years old. (*f*)

### SECTION III.

Of Dr. *Samuel Clarke*.

**A**LTHOUGH I have frequently had occasion to speak of this memorable and valuable person, his character and sentiments; this will be a proper place to enlarge somewhat more upon the subject.

From

(*f*) In one place, enumerating the kindnesses and benefactions of several of his friends, together with some other means by which he was supported, with what innocent simplicity and pleasantry does he conclude; “ These,  
“ with

From having adopted a great part of Dr. Clarke's Amendments of the Liturgy of the church of England, in the Reformed Liturgy in use at the chapel in Essex-Street, and from those just commendations which will ever be due to him from all lovers of truth and good learning, and which I have never been backward to pay to him, I have been sometimes called upon by anonymous letters, and in other ways, to account for my deviation from his sentiments upon some other parts of the christian doctrine.

But surely the approbation of the Doctor's improvements of the Church's liturgy, in the article of worship, by his confining it to the single Person of the Father only, did not involve in it an assent to his peculiar opinion concerning Christ; which was that for which the writer has been principally blamed. Sincere christians, *equally Unitarians*, may see cause to dissent from each other about the date of Christ's existence; whether, for  
instance,

“ with *Eclipses, Comets*, Lectures of several sorts in London and elsewhere, have made me up such a competency as has greatly contented me, and enabled me to go on all along comfortably in my studies.”

“ *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Whiston.* p. 346, 347.”

instance, he received his being from God before the world was made, or whether it commenced only 1783 years ago ; and may nevertheless unite in the same forms of worship.

Since, however, this very learned man was led to entertain *undue* prejudices, as it appears to me, against those who are of this latter sentiment, and has oftentimes expressed himself hastily and peremptorily, and in too general terms, in condemnation of them ; which, from his high and deserved reputation, has had vast influence (g) upon many persons, and kept them from impartially examining into the matter for themselves : I shall endeavour to point out what in his assertions concerning it, is not so well founded ; not in the spirit of cavilling, from which I would be far removed, or with a view to enter into controversy, but as a seeker of truth, and for the love of it.

(g) “ Had not the late Dr. *Clarke*, by his great judgment in other things, given a sort of sanction to the “ *Arian* hypothesis, and, in the opinion of many, almost “ precluded all (farther) examination of the Scriptures ; “ this great controversy had been long ago determined “ in favour of the *humanity* of Christ.”

“ A Cordial for Low Spirits. Vol. I. Pref. p. xvi.”



it. And I hold it the more becoming me to undertake this task here; because many persons, by embracing such high, and, as they appear to me, unscriptural sentiments concerning Christ's prior state and dignity, are drawn aside from the pure worship and adoration of the Father only. For although *Socinus* himself, notwithstanding his lower opinion of Christ, pleaded most vehemently for the worship of him; and although I know on the other hand some excellent persons, that are *Arians*, who would think it sinful in them to pray to Christ, or to any person, but God: Yet the latter, who maintain that Christ was the subordinate Creator of all things, and also look upon him to have been the representative of God all along from the beginning, in the O. T. (whilst the *true God* disappeared,) *who gave the law, conducted the Israelites, &c.* which was the sentiment of Dr. Clarke: such persons will be more likely to worship a creature so astonishingly great, if it was possible that any such could be, than those who consider him only as a human being, but lately called into existence.

*Of Dr. Clarke's method of arguing against the Socinians, and for the preexistence of Christ.*

What seems to have prevented this judicious writer from (*e*) weighing the arguments for the proper humanity of Christ, with his usual impartiality, was the strong persuasion which he had early imbibed, concerning the preface of St. *John's* gospel; that the *Word*, or *Logos*, there spoken of, was none other than

(*e*) A very singular *notion*, which he had taken up, concerning Christ's origin, seems also to have thrown a mist over his eyes in this respect. For he maintained, that he was *not a creature like all the rest of the creatures of God*, but something as it were *between God and the creature*: in which he was followed by the learned Mr. *James Peirce*, whose sufferings in the cause of the One true God, the Father, threescore years ago, under the Western Inquisition, as he calls it, at *Exeter*, are well known. In passing censure on the peculiar metaphysic opinion of Dr. *Clarke*, on which this strange *notion* was grounded, viz. "that any creature whatsoever *might possibly have been coeternal with it's Creator*," Mr. Whiston says; "See the amazing subtlety of a great Metaphysician, and contradictory to his own *natural* notion, expressed in the eighth Sermon of his first volume, p. 173; where the Doctor justly affirms, that *He who made all things, could not but be before the things that he made*."——Historical Mem. of Dr. Clarke, p. 55.

than Christ himself, who before he was born of his mother Mary, had existed from the beginning, and been the instrument of God in the creation of the world.

Indeed he so far overcame the prejudices of his education, as to reject the commonly received interpretation of the phrase, *The word was God*; which supposes, that the word, or *Logos*, meaning *Christ* thereby, was “ *Another self-existent, underived, independent Person, co-ordinate in essential supreme authority and dominion, with the Father Almighty. For this, says he, (h)* “ *whatever metaphysical union may be imagined of Two such co-ordinate Persons,* “ *will always and necessarily, in the religious* “ *and moral sense, be real Polytheism; sub-* “ *verting that first and great foundation of* “ *all Religion, both natural and revealed,* “ *the monarchical unity of the Great King*

Z 2

“ and

(h) Dr. *Clarke* might well give offence to those who did not love a free and impartial search after truth, which he so laudably exercised: and the more, as his writings tended to evince that the acknowledging Christ to be God equal to the Father, was, as he expresses it, *real Polytheism*, directly contrary to *the first and great commandment*, delivered by Moses and confirmed by Christ himself.



“ and God of the universe; and directly  
 “ contrary to that *first and great command-*  
 “ *ment* in *Both Testaments*; (Deut vi. 4;  
 “ and Mark xii. 29.) *Hear, O Israel! the*  
 “ *Lord our God is one Lord, &c.*” Dr.  
 Clarke, however, never could recede so far  
 from the persuasion he had first taken up, as  
 to see that it is not Christ, but God himself,  
 whom St. John here describes.

The opinion which he very early fell  
 into and maintained to the last, and which  
 gave great offence to many, (i) was that  
 which reduced Christ to the state of a de-  
 pendent being, deriving his existence and all  
 his attributes from the Father, as from the  
 supreme cause. So that he interpreted that  
 declaration of the evangelist, *The word was*  
*God*; not as implying, that Christ was God  
 in the highest sense, but *a* God, a Divine  
 Person, subordinate to the Father, and re-  
 ceiving his being and every thing from Him;  
 and also that “ the words (k) *εν αρχη ην ο λογος*,  
 “ *in the beginning was the word*; and, *ο λογος*  
 “ *σαρξ εγενετο*, *the Word was made flesh*;  
 “ mean, that the *same Person*, who *in the*  
 “ *fulnefs*

(i) *Clarke's Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 82.

(k) *Id. Ibid.* p. 81.

“ *fulness of time was made man and dwelt*  
 “ *with us, did before dwell with God, and*  
 “ *acted in the capacity of a Divine Person,*  
 “ *as the visible image of the invisible God,*  
 “ *by whom God made all things, and by*  
 “ *whom all things were from the begin-*  
 “ *ning transacted between God and the*  
 “ *creature.*”

In thus supposing Christ to be the *Word*,  
 or *Logos*, here intended by St. John; and  
 in adopting thence the opinion, that Christ  
 was before the creation, and assisted in it as  
 God's instrument; Dr. Clarke did not con-  
 sider enough the objections which lay against  
 such an interpretation: nor have I ever seen  
 a solution of them. I shall mention only  
 two of them.

*Objections to Dr. Clarke's application of this*  
*preface of St. John's gospel, to Christ, as*  
*being a great preexistent Spirit, by whom*  
*God made all things.*

*Obj. 1.* It is remarkable that the three  
 former evangelists and historians of our Lord's  
 life, *Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, and the

latter of them in the second part of his history, called the *Acts*, uniformly describe Christ as a human creature, and never speak of him as being of a different nature from other men, or as having had any existence before he was born of Mary, his mother.

Such an invariable agreement and harmony in this respect, can in no other way be accounted for, but from this; that they did not believe him any other than a human being. And therefore we must conclude that the meaning of this passage of St. John is misunderstood by Dr. Clarke, and misapplied to Christ, who had no such prior existence in another state, before his birth at Bethlehem.

For we cannot suppose that the apostle *John* had any private particular revelation of a thing so extraordinary, made to himself, which was not communicated and made known to the other apostles and evangelists; as it would make them to have been most imperfect preachers of the gospel, not only during their lives, but also to the successive generations of mankind by their writings after their death. And it cannot on the  
other



other hand be imagined, that they were acquainted with such an extraordinary circumstance, so much to the honour of their great *Master*; viz. that he had existed before all ages, and was the subordinate creator of the world; and yet never once to divulge it.

*Obj.* 2. It is a farther insuperable difficulty, and obstacle to Christ being in any shape the creator of all things, that there is an utter silence concerning it throughout the Scriptures of the Old Testament; *God*, *JEHOVAH*, the single Person so called, being constantly and invariably named, as the sole creator of all things, without any under-agent, deputy, or assistant.

Exodus xx. 2, 3. That *single Being*, who says, *I am the LORD (or Jehovah) thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: Thou shalt have no other gods before ME*; proceeds to say, ver. 11, in six days the LORD (or Jehovah) *made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that in them is.* 2 Kings xix. 15. O LORD (or Jehovah) *God of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims! Thou art the God, even Thou alone, of all*

*the kingdoms of the earth ; THOU hast made heaven and earth.*

In the New Testament, Christ is no less formally and expressly excluded from having any part or share in the creation of the world.

Even after he was raised from the dead, and in his state of highest exaltation, his apostles, in a solemn address to God, stile him *the SERVANT of the God* who made *heaven and earth*. Acts iv. 24. 30. *Lord, (or Sovereign Master) Thou art the God, who hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is!—grant—that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy servant* (for so it ought to be translated, and not *thy holy child*) *Jesus*. See also Rev. iv. 10. xiv. 7.

And St. Paul tells his audience at Athens, Acts xvii. 24. 31. that *God, that made the world ; HE, that single Person, who was Lord of heaven and earth ; hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by a man whom he hath ordained : whereof HE hath given assurance unto all men, in that HE hath raised him from the dead.*

In

In the estimate therefore of his apostles the blessed Jesus had no existence before he was born into this world, so far from having any thing to do in the creation of it : but he was a man, chosen by God, the sole creator and governor of all things, and deputed to hold a most important office under him.

How easily reconciled and consistent this is with the language used by St. Paul, Coloss. i. 16. *by HIM (i. e. Christ) were all things created* ; Heb. i. 2. *by whom also he (God) made the worlds, &c* ; what kind of creation it is, that is meant in these latter passages, has been elsewhere explained (1).

AFTER having thus given his own interpretation of this preface of St. John's gospel, that the *Word*, the Logos signified Christ in his preexistent state, to which there are these and other insurmountable objections ; Dr. Clarke proceeds to assign his reasons for rejecting their opinion, who take it not to be spoken of Christ, but of God himself ; and who hold him to be there described in a way

(1) " A Sequel to the Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick. p. 454 to page 492."



way to which the Jews were accustomed, by one of his attributes, his *Word*, or his *WISDOM*; for so the term *Logos*, may properly be rendered. I shall produce what he says, in his own words, with some remarks upon it.

Dr. *Clarke*. “ The *other* interpretation  
 “ is of those, who taking the λογος, (the  
 “ *Word*,) not to signify at all a real *Person*,  
 “ render the words thus: *In the beginning*  
 “ *was*, REASON, *and* REASON *was with*  
 “ *God, and* REASON *was God*. But the  
 “ sense of these propositions amounts to  
 “ nothing more, than that *God was always*  
 “ *a Rational Being*.”

*Remark*. In one place of this work, (*m*) our author observes, that “ the *Jews and Jewish*  
 “ *christians personated* (personified) *the inter-*  
 “ *nal wisdom* of God; or speak of it *figura-*  
 “ *tively*, according to the genius of their  
 “ language, *as of a Person*.” And would it not have been better for him to have attended more to *the genius of the Hebrew language* in unravelling the apostle’s meaning, rather than follow the reveries of *Plato’s*  
 philo-

(*m*) “ The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity,” p. 285,

philosophy, brought into christianity by the learned heathen converts to it, by making the term λογος, the *word*, signify a real distinct Person, *a second God*? If also he had more considered the acknowledged reference which St. John here makes to the description of *Wisdom*, in *Proverbs* viii. and had he translated the Evangelist's words more agreeably to the Scriptures and the genius of our language; *In the beginning was Wisdom, and Wisdom was with God, and Wisdom was God*; taking also along with him the false opinions concerning the origin and government of the world then prevailing: The Doctor would then have seen, that it was not an idle tautology, which the apostle here uses, *merely declaring that God was a rational or a wise Being*; but a doctrine of great moment, necessary to be held forth with proper solemnity in those times, when *many christians* were falling into the notion, that this world was not made by God himself, (see p. 234) but by some inferior, less perfect principle; and that it was of importance to teach them, in the very beginning of his history, that all things proceeded from the most perfect wisdom of the  
sole

sole Creator and supreme governor of all things; and particularly the christian dispensation of which he was about to treat.

Dr. *Clarke*. “ Which though indeed it  
 “ be in itself a certain truth; and, as to the  
 “ manner of the expressions it might per-  
 “ haps in some sense by a *figurative* way of  
 “ speaking be affirmed, that the *Reason*  
 “ (*Wisdom*) of God is God; yet this is no-  
 “ thing to the purpose of what St. *John*  
 “ is here treating of, the *Incarnation* of  
 “ *Christ*.”

*Remark*. Here this worthy person shews what fast hold the prejudices of his education had upon him, by taking it as a point certain, that the design of the sacred historian is to treat of what he calls by that harsh, however customary phrase, the *Incarnation* of Christ. If the interpretation, which he disapproves, suited the design and purpose of the apostle, in setting forth and teaching by whose power and wisdom it was that Christ spoke and acted, and with which he was invested, it was a point of no consequence, that it did not fall in with his own notion of Christ being a great preexistent spirit, that had been the under agent in the crea-  
 tion,



tion, entering into a human body and animating it for upwards of thirty years; which is what the Doctor meant by *the Incarnation of Christ*.

Dr. Clarke. “ According to *this interpretation* therefore, all those declarations of Scripture, wherein ’tis affirmed, that *the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us*, Joh. i. 14. that *Christ came forth from the Father*, Joh. xvi. 28. that he *came down from heaven*, Joh. iii. 13. that he (n) *came down from heaven, not to do*  
“ *his*

(n) *Came down from heaven.*] Socinus, and some of his followers had a strange fancy of Christ having been at some unknown time of his life, taken up personally into heaven, and sent down again to the earth, which was the way in which they solved those expressions concerning him, Joh. iii. 13. that he *came down from heaven*, &c. Upon this Dr. Clarke remarks (*Script. Doctr.* p. 99.) “ Nothing can be more harsh than  
“ than the *Socinians*’ interpretation of this passage: who  
“ feign that Christ was taken up into heaven, as Moses  
“ of old into the mount, to receive instructions; and  
“ then came down again to preach. Whereas the plain  
“ meaning is, that he *was in the beginning with God*, before he was *made flesh and came into the world*.” But Dr. Clarke should have recollected, that others had given an interpretation of this phrase more consistent with the  
Scriptures;

“ *his own will, but the will of him that sent*  
 “ *him, Joh. vi. 38. that he (o) took part of*  
 “ *flesh and blood, Heb. ii. 14. that having (p)*  
 “ *been*

Scriptures; and it has been above (p. 60) shewn, that all that Christ here intended by his *coming down from heaven*, was his having a divine commission or authority.

The true interpretation of these and the like phrases will be readily and universally seen and acknowledged, whenever the time comes, that christians shall study the Scripture with impartiality, and make it its own interpreter. To give an instance akin to that before us. When our Lord says, *Matth. xi. 23. of a city of Galilee, that it was exalted into heaven*, he means the advantages and opportunities which it enjoyed by his abode in it, and the extraordinary communications from God which they were favoured with by his means. This interpretation is given by Dr. *Whitby*, at a time when he was a believer of the doctrine of the trinity, which he afterwards publicly retracted. “ *And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted into heaven.] i. e. advanced highly above others, by my* “ *presence with thee, and my miracles wrought in thee.*” *Whitby* in loc.

(o) *He took part of flesh and blood.] This passage should be translated; Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood; he also himself in like manner was a partaker of the same; i. e. Christ was a mortal man, like all others—directly contrary to the purpose for which the Doctor quotes this latter clause of the sentence.*

(p) The apostle's words, *ἐν σαρκὶ θεῷ ὑπαρχων*, may at least full as properly be translated, not, *having been*, as referring

“ been *in the form of God*, he did (*εκενωσεν*  
 “ *εαυτον*) *empty himself* of that form, and  
 “ *was made in the likeness of men*, and  
 “ *found in fashion as a man*, Phil. ii. 6, 7,  
 “ 8. All these expressions, I say, (accord-  
 “ ing to that last interpretation of the words,  
 “ Θεος ην ο λογος,) will in reality mean no-  
 “ thing more, than that the *wisdom of the*  
 “ *Father* dwelt in the *man Christ Jesus*;  
 “ that is, that Christ was only, in a *more*  
 “ *perfect and continued* manner than other  
 “ prophets, an *inspired MAN*. Than which  
 “ interpretation nothing can be more *forced*  
 “ and

ferring to what Christ had been in a prior state; but, *be-*  
*ing in the form of God: a form*, in which he appeared  
 upon earth; and which evidently *consisted in the godlike mi-*  
*raculous power* with which he was invested. Of this *form*  
*of God*, he emptied himself, i. e. laid it aside, never used  
 these *divine powers*, for his own private gratification or  
 even necessary support, to procure honour to himself; but  
 lived an ordinary man, dependent on the bounty of others;  
 and at last voluntarily submitted to the most ignominious  
 and torturing death, when he had power to have avoided  
 it. N. B. Such an example of humility, in devoting  
 himself to toils and sufferings and death, to bring us to  
 virtue and eternal life, is more suited to us men, than the  
 like condescension and sufferings of a great preexistent  
 Being, the subordinate creator of the world, such as Dr.  
*Clarke* supposes Christ to have been.



“ and *unnatural*. 'Tis reducing the whole  
 “ doctrine of the *humiliation* and *incarna-*  
 “ *tion* of the Son of God, to a mere empty  
 “ *figure of speech*; and under *the appear-*  
 “ *ance* of speaking of *Christ* as the *supreme*  
 “ *God*, making him *really* nothing but a  
 “ *mere man*.”

*Remark.* If after so magnificent a description (in the Hebrew idiom) of the divine wisdom, as the sole efficient cause and author of every thing in the natural and moral world, the apostle concludes this introduction to his history, with saying, that this *Word* or *Wisdom* was made or became *flesh*, a mortal man; i. e. dwelt in the man Christ Jesus: it is not on that account to be quarrelled with, however much it may fall short of men's *preconceived* ideas concerning Christ. The only point to be regarded is, whether it be a just interpretation, and the apostle's meaning.

Nor can it be called in itself a disparaging representation. What can be more honourable to any creature, than to have the *Wisdom of the Father of the universe* bestowed upon him, for the accomplishment of the noblest and most excellent purpose; for promoting the virtue and happiness of the whole human

human race? And what more can be desired in a heavenly teacher and guide? With such divine endowments he is every thing to us, that we can want or desire. (q)

*A vin-*

(q) Dr. Clarke indeed will have it, ("Script. Doctr. of the Trinity, p. 121.) "that it was the unanimous opinion all antiquity, that the ANGEL who said, Exod. iii. 6. *I am the God of thy Father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*; was Christ: that he was the *Angel of the Covenant*, Mal. iii. 1, &c. &c." In another place he says, p. 109. "It is the constant doctrine of all the primitive writers of the church, that every appearance of God the Father in the Old Testament, was *Christ* appearing in the name or Person of the Father, &c."

But this *unanimous opinion of antiquity* is really nothing but the fanciful comment of one man, Justin Martyr, an ingenious heathen philosopher, who, it is well known, grafted Plato's notion of a *second god*, upon the gospel; and misunderstanding the hebrew Scriptures, supposes, according to his heathen ideas, that the Supreme Being never appeared nor acted personally, but deputed Christ to appear and act for him; and whom all the rest followed.

The whole argument has been considered much at large in another place, "Sequel to an Apology," &c. p. 295, to 387. and to that I refer.

One wonders however, that what Dr. Clarke is constrained to allow in another place, p. 374. should not have made him hesitate in admitting so *strange* a doctrine, when he says; "'Tis observable that we never find in

A a

"Scripture

*A vindication and proof of Christ's proper humanity.*

And why look upon it as an undervaluing circumstance and description of Christ, that he was, only in a more perfect and continued manner than other prophets, an *inspired* man: by the term *inspired*, understanding the most extraordinary communications of wisdom and power from God, such as were never conferred upon any of the human race? Why not rest satisfied with this, if it meet every idea the Scriptures give us of him, and which he gave of himself?

Now it is open to every one to see, that in the antient prophetic accounts, which preceded

“ Scripture any worship paid to Christ, upon account of  
 “ God’s having *created the world by him*, or of *any other*  
 “ *act done by him* before his incarnation.” And I would add, Not only this; no respect whatsoever ever paid to him, as *supposed* creator of the world, or whilst he is imagined to have been the substitute of the Deity, during the whole Mosaic dispensation; but, all the while, not one of the prophets, not one Israelite, not one person from the creation till the birth, may I not add, till the death of Christ, and some years after, ever suspecting that he had any thing to do, or even had any existence all that time.



preceded the birth of Christ, he is spoken of as a man, a human creature, highly favoured of God and gifted with extraordinary powers from him; and nothing more. He was foretold to be (*Gen. xxii. 18.*) of the *seed* of Abraham; (*Deut. xviii. 15, 18.*) *a prophet, like unto Moses*; (*Psalms cxxxii. 11.*) of the *family of David*; &c. &c.

As a man; as a prophet, though of the highest order, he was expected by his nation, to whom these promises were made, and by whom they were and have been preserved.

His birth of Mary, his state of helpless infancy, his growing improvements in years and knowledge, which are particularly and distinctly recorded, proclaimed him to be of the same nature with other men.

As such he presented himself to his country, when he entered on his public ministry, after his solemn inauguration into it by John the Baptist; who naturally calls him (*Joh. i. 30.*) *a man*; never suspecting that he would be looked upon to be any other sort of being, angel or spirit, much less the most high God. Bred up at Nazareth, he was called Jesus of Nazareth; a name he gives

himself now he is in heaven, though many of his followers upon earth are ashamed of looking upon him in that light, as *a man* highly exalted and favoured of God, above all others. And we find his mother and kindred mentioned as those of other men; neither his mother, nor any other person, ever imagining that he was any other than a human creature, most highly favoured of God.

He never claimed any honours or respect on his own account, or as due to himself as a person *only inferior* to the most high God; but such as belonged only to a prophet, an extraordinary messenger of God, to listen to the message and truths, which he delivered from him.

As to that saying of Christ, *I came forth from the Father*, Joh. xvi. 28. which Dr. Clarke thinks to have a reference to some former state, in which our Lord had existed before he was born here; I would refer to what (q) has been noted upon it, in another place: observing only thence, for the sake of those who have not that work at hand;  
that

(q) A Sequel to the Apology, &c. p. 232.

that *To come out from God, to come forth from the Father*, signify to have an extraordinary commission and authority from him; and nothing more. For which interpretation we have our Lord's own express words and illustration. *Jesus said unto them*, (i. e. to the unbelieving Jews, who would not allow him to be their great prophet, the Messiah;) *I proceeded forth, and came from God: neither came I of myself, but he sent me*. Here he plainly teaches us; that his *proceeding forth*, or *coming from God*, is the same as *being sent* by him: and both expressions are contrasted with his *coming of himself*; i. e. without a commission from God, without *being sent* by him.

Dr. Clarke. “ ’Tis reducing the whole  
 “ doctrine of the *humiliation* and *incarna-*  
 “ *tion* of the Son of God, to a mere empty  
 “ *figure of speech*; and under the *appearance*  
 “ of speaking of Christ as the Supreme  
 “ God, making him *really* nothing but a  
 “ *mere man*.”

*Remark.* Undoubtedly the account of Christ's proper humanity, which those, whom Dr. Clarke opposes, maintain to be the very doctrine of the Scriptures, does in fact fo-



far reduce, as to take quite away, all that *humiliation* of our Lord, which Dr. Clarke calls his *Incarnation*. For it shews, that so far from having any merit, or it being any act of condescension in him, in becoming man; he had no choice in it, nor any consciousness of it beforehand: it having been owing to the pure goodness of God, which gives all things to all, that he had so noble a being bestowed upon him so lately, who before had no being. But this is not diminishing aught from Christ's real dignity and character, or sinking them below their true excellence: but bringing them to the just standard of truth and the Scriptures.

What now, may we ask, made this most upright man, and great master of reasoning, Dr. *Clarke*, to overlook the vast weight of evidence which arises from the testimony and uncontradicted declarations of Christ himself, of his apostles, and others his countrymen and cotemporaries, that he was *really a man as others are, and not any other sort of being?* What hindered him from seeing, that God, by himself alone, was the Creator of all things? And still more, what made him insensible of the *astounding incongruity,*

gruity, I had almost said, the *utter impossibility* that *one*, whom he supposed to have been the creator of all things under the Supreme, whom he supposed to have existed with the Father from the beginning and before all worlds, and of whom he held it too bold to say, (r) *that there was a time when he was not*; that such a being, whom he would not allow (see p. 358.) to be called a creature, should become first a senseless *embryo*; then a new born babe, without understanding but with capacities for it; and afterwards acquire knowledge and virtue by degrees, as the Scriptures represent him, (Luke ii. 40. 52.) ; unconscious all the while

A a 4 of

*Proposition xiv.*

(r) “ *The Scripture, in declaring the Son’s derivation from the Father, never makes mention of any limitation of Time; but always supposes and affirms him to have existed with the Father from the beginning and before all worlds.*”

xv.

“ *They therefore have also justly been censured, who taking upon them to be wise above what is written, and intruding into things which they have not seen; have presumed to affirm (οτι ην πωτε οτι ουκ ην) that there was a time when the Son was not.*” “ *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity,*” p. 271, 274.

of what he is supposed to have been from all eternity? I repeat here, that I believe it to have been, among other things, very principally owing to his unmoveable persuasion, that the introductory part of St. John's gospel wholly related to Christ in a pre-existent state; in which he was confirmed by that early prejudice, which he retained to the last, the fancy and invention of some of the first heathen converts to the gospel, that Christ was *the angel of the Lord*, that every *appearance of God the Father* in the Old Testament, was *Christ appearing in the name or person of the Father*. His mind intangled with this inconceivable original dignity of Christ, which he imagined really to belong to him, he could never disengage himself so far as to examine fairly and thoroughly the arguments of those he calls *Socinians*, which tended to diminish it; or bring himself to speak of their persons with becoming equity (s) and candour. *And I*  
*am*

(s) " The *Socinian writers*, from these and some other  
 " the like texts of Scripture, have *very unreasonably pre-*  
 " *sumed* to collect, that our Saviour was no greater a  
 " person than a mere man, born of the virgin Mary,  
 " without any former existence, and exalted by the power  
 " of



*am sorry to have occasion to observe; that the fashion still continues to our day, of decrying those who are called Socinians; i.e. those who from the Scriptures, assert Christ to have been a human being and nothing higher; and of condemning them in a summary way, as being scarcely, if at all christians. For the multitude, who herein only follow the cry of others, one can only pity them, that they are not better informed. But it is to be wished, that ingenious men would rather consider their*

“ of God to this state of dignity in heaven.” Dr.

“ *Clarke's Serm.* Vol. vi. 8vo. p. 92.

In his *Introduction* to his “ *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*,” p. xxxvi. he mentions those who run in the “ other extreme into *Socinianism*, to the diminution of the “ honour of the Son of God, and to the taking away the “ very being of the *Holy Spirit*.” As Dr. *Clarke* could not but know that these persons were fully persuaded that their opinion was the very doctrine of the Scriptures, as much as he believed his own to be, by whatever name it was called; he should have refrained from speaking of them in terms that implied, that they did injury to Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Who did the most honour to Christ, was quite beside the question. Both doubtless equally intended to do him all the honour they could. The only point was, whose sentiments and language concerning him agreed best with the Scriptures?

*their arguments for the proper humanity of Christ, and point out, if there be any thing wrong, or unsound, or unscriptural in them; and not censure or asperse their persons or opinions.*

*Concerning the worship supposed by Dr. Clarke and others, to be due to Christ as Mediator.*

Besides these mistakes regarding the *person* and *origin* of Christ, which Dr. Clarke appears to have fallen into, there were some other things advanced by him relating to the *worship* of Christ, which it will be proper for me to review.

His Amendments in the Book of Common Prayer plainly shew that he disapproved the offering up of prayer to Christ in the public assemblies of christians, as he has blotted out all those passages where there is any invocation of him.

Mr. *Emlyn* however, who had much intimacy with him, and perhaps was more acquainted with his sentiments on these subjects than any one, in vindicating him from  
a charge

a charge of having changed his mind in *this article of worship*, brought against him after his death, says; “ I never found that he  
 “ doubted of the worship of *the Son* by in-  
 “ vocation. The whole (*t*) truth of the  
 “ matter, (as he goes on to speak) as far as  
 “ I can judge, is this. Dr. Clarke insisted  
 “ but sparingly on the absolute and direct  
 “ worship of the Son by prayer, in compari-  
 “ son of the Father; as judging this last to  
 “ be the chief and most important article  
 “ in the christian religion, *viz.* to offer our  
 “ prayers to God the Father through Jesus  
 “ Christ, which our Lord has laid down as  
 “ the rule of our practice, Joh. xvi. 26.  
 “ *At that day ye shall ask the FATHER in*  
 “ *my name*; without mention of prayer to  
 “ himself: though on some particular rare  
 “ occasions we may find examples of prayer  
 “ to him.” And yet, by the way, I would  
 observe, that many will think the weight of  
 any supposed scriptural instances of prayer to  
 Christ, much weakened, if not intirely over-  
 turned, by what this candid writer adds soon  
 after. “ Indeed (says he) there is no example  
 “ in the Scriptures, of any *solemn stated general*  
 “ prayers

(*t*) “ *Emlyn's Works*, Vol. ii. p. 484, 485.



“ prayers to *Jesus Christ*, in the *ordinary*  
 “ offices of devotion. The prayer of *Ste-*  
 “ *phen* to him, (*Acts vii.*) was a *single petition*,  
 “ on that extraordinary *special* occasion of his  
 “ visible appearance, or representation before  
 “ his eyes. The other instances alleged ;  
 “ such as *God and our Lord Jesus Christ*  
 “ *direct our way to you,—and comfort you :*  
 “ And those salutations, *Grace and peace to*  
 “ *you from God the Father, and from our*  
 “ *Lord Jesus Christ*, are rather pious *wishes*  
 “ of good *from*, than prayers *to* him ; and  
 “ are directed and spoken, not *to* Christ,  
 “ but *to* christians, to *you* and *you :* whereas  
 “ *Prayer speaks to the object of it*, to God,  
 “ or Christ himself, and *not to the persons*  
 “ *prayed for.*”

Dr. *Clarke* in one of his discourses on *the*  
*Unity of God*, thus lays down the ground of  
 that *mediatorial* worship, which he supposed  
 to be due to Christ ;

(u) “ Another *kind* or *species* of *idolatry*  
 “ is, when men apply themselves to God,  
 “ through *false* and *idol-Mediators*, in dimi-  
 “ nution of the honour of the *one true Me-*  
 “ *diator,*

“ diator, whom God himself has expressly  
 “ appointed to be *alone* our advocate, inter-  
 “ cessor, and judge. *God who at sundry*  
 “ *times, and in divers manners, spake in times*  
 “ *past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath*  
 “ *in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,*  
 “ *who, when he had by himself purged our*  
 “ *sins, sat down on the right hand of the*  
 “ *majesty on high; where he ever liveth, to*  
 “ *make intercession for us.* To us christians  
 “ therefore, as there is (if we will use St.  
 “ Paul’s expression) One God, even the Fa-  
 “ ther, of whom are all things; so there is  
 “ also one Lord, even Jesus Christ, through  
 “ whom are all things. For there is one  
 “ God, and one Mediator between God and  
 “ men, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. ii. 5.  
 “ As therefore the setting up any idol or  
 “ false God, in opposition to, or in con-  
 “ junction with the true God, is idolatry  
 “ with regard to God; so the setting up any  
 “ idol or false Mediator, in opposition to,  
 “ or in conjunction with the One true Medi-  
 “ ator, is idolatry with regard to Christ.  
 “ Which most evidently shews that the wor-  
 “ ship paid by the church of Rome to *Angels,*  
 “ and to *Saints departed,* to *images* and re-  
 “ *lics,*

“ *lies*, and to the *blessed Virgin*, whom they  
 “ profanely stile the *mother of God*, is truly  
 “ and properly *idolatry*. And the ex-  
 “ cuse they plead, that the worship thus  
 “ paid, is not *divine*, but only *mediatorial*  
 “ worship; is nothing to the purpose, and  
 “ alters not at all the *nature*, but only a  
 “ *circumstance* of the crime: An *Idol-medi-*  
 “ ator being as truly and plainly an *idol*,  
 “ and a departing from Christ our only true  
 “ *mediator* and *advocate*; as the worshipping  
 “ an *Idol-God*, is a departure from the *liv-*  
 “ *ing and true God*.”

*Remarks on this plea for the worship of Christ,  
 as Mediator.*

*Rem. 1.* The passages of Scripture here produced by Dr. *Clarke*, are but a slender support, on which to raise such a mighty fabric as that of the worship of Christ, in any shape, or under any character. Whatever we read there, of Christ's *sitting at the right hand of God*, (Heb. i. 3.) of his *sitting down on the right hand of the majesty on high*; whatever be implied in it, we cannot thence be authorized to worship and pray to him,



unless we have some special command from God that we are to do it on that account: but there is no precept of this kind whatsoever to be found.

*Rem. 2.* With respect to Christ's *intercession* for us, (*t*) I would observe; that the allusions which St. Paul makes to their ceremonial worship, in his epistle to some *Hebrew* christians, could never be intended by him to be taken literally; as Christ is therein said to be and to do several things, which are incompatible with each other; to be *the high-priest*, for instance, and *the sacrifice* at the same time that was to be offered; and so on. His general view in this epistle, is to shew the comparative excellency of the gospel, and its divine founder above the Mosaic dispensation.

The great benefits and advantages which we *now* receive from Christ, are not to be looked for in any thing that he does for us at present; but in the directions and motives to a holy life bequeathed to us in the New Testament, especially in the teachings of Christ himself, and his bright example, by  
which

(*t*) See this point somewhat more particularly explained in "A Sequel to the Apology," &c. p. 87, 88, &c.

which they are illustrated and enforced : by which all who are willing to become his scholars, are instructed how they may attain an immortal existence, and share with him in the glories which he their great Lord and Master now enjoys, as the reward of his unwearied efforts in the cause of virtue, and for the good of mankind.

*Rem. 3.* Far too great stress has been laid upon the application of the term *Mediator* to Christ ; and the christian world much misled by it. It is never used by our Lord himself ; nor by any of the sacred writers, except St. Paul, and is applied by him to Moses as well as to Christ ; in this signification they were, both of them, persons employed by Almighty God, on his extraordinary messages, to teach his will to mankind ; although the one was exceedingly superior to the other in divine gifts and endowments, and in the extent and importance of his commission : Moses sent only to one people ; Jesus, to all mankind (*w*).

But

(*w*) A learned modern has very lately appropriated this title of *Mediator* to Christ, in very early time indeed. “ With our Saviour (says he) did those walk, who are said  
“ (Gen.

But from our Lord's having been at first thus employed by the heavenly Father, as his mediator or minister to mankind, we cannot presume to say, that he is now actually so employed; much less can we infer, when nothing is expressly told us of it, that he knows the particular concerns of each individual christian,

“ (Gen. v. 24.) to have *walked with God*; from HIS  
 “ *presence Cain*, (iv. 24.) after the murder of *Abel*, *went*  
 “ *out*; from HIS *face he was hid*, because from that time  
 “ he was excluded from *his* special protection: he never  
 “ after this enjoyed that intercourse with the MEDIATOR-  
 “ GOD, which HE had been pleased to continue from the  
 “ beginning. It was HE who appeared to *Adam* immediately after the fall, whose voice when our first parents  
 “ heard (iii. 8, 9.) *they hid themselves from the presence of*  
 “ *the LORD God*.”

Dr. Bandinel's Sermons, p. 181, 182. Oxford. 1780.

This is a very different *Mediator* from St. Paul's;  
 I Tim. ii. 5. *There is ONE GOD, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*. If our Saviour was, as Dr. Bandinel maintains, Jehovah, the most high God; it may very properly be asked, if there was any other Jehovah at the same time, who was the most high God? And if there was another most high God, whether there were not two most high Gods? and how to reconcile this with St. Paul's declaration here, that there was but ONE God? The supposition of the *two natures* in Christ, to make him God and mortal man at the same time, has been shewn (p. 57, &c.) above to be a *fiction*, without any support from the Scriptures.



tian, and that we are to go to him in prayer about them, as one who is invisibly present with us, and is to manage them for us ; or that we are to make our requests to him of any sort, or in any way. Whatever countenance may be *supposed* to be for this, in other parts of the Scripture, (of which I know not any in reality) there is none furnished here.

Nor can any conclusions for considering him as a *mediator* in this light, and offering prayer to him, be formed from those other expressions of giving thanks *through Christ*, of praying *in his name*, and the like : but on these it is not needful now to dwell.

*Rem. 4.* Dr. *Clarke* here brings in the Papists as guilty of a *new* species of idolatry, by calling their popish Saints, *idol-mediators*, and the worship of them, *idolatry with respect to Christ* ; therein taking for granted that *Christ*, under the idea of a mediator, was an object of worship. But although in this he followed other great names that went before him, it is an idolatry, both name and thing, for which there is no foundation in the sacred writings. For idolatry respects  
the

the *living* and *true God* only, and no other person. In all the injunctions or prohibitions, relating to this important subject in the Scripture, there is no divine worship or invocation of any other being or person supposed, but of God ; nor any criminality ever imputed in departing from the worship of any other Being or Person, but of God only.

We may now be able to form some judgment, how far that description of the *mediatorial worship* of Christ is consonant with the truth, which Dr. Clarke gives in his *fiftieth Proposition* of the work before us.

After having laid down in his foregoing proposition, (but upon what just foundations the reader will judge for himself from what has been said above) that, “ at  
 “ his Incarnation, Christ freely divested  
 “ himself of that glory, which (x) *he had*  
 “ *with*

(x) 60. Joh. xvii. 5. And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with thine own self, with the glory *which I had with Thee before the world was*. “ The Socinians, Dr. Clarke remarks, Script. Doctr. p. 119. interpret this passage to signify only the glory which Christ had in the foreknowledge and predetermination of God ; (ἡ εἰς αὐτὸν παρὰ σοῦ, *which I had, laid up for me with Thee, before the*  
 B b 2 “ *world*

“ *with God before the world was*; and in  
 “ this state of humiliation he suffered and  
 “ died for the sins of the world;” it fol-  
 “ lows

(y) *Proposition L.*

“ After and upon the account of the  
 “ accomplishment of which dispensation, he  
 “ is described in Scripture as invested with  
 “ *distinct worship* in his own *Person*; his  
 “ *original glory and dignity* being at the same  
 “ time revealed, and his *exaltation* in the  
 “ human nature to his *mediatorial kingdom*  
 “ declared: Himself *sitting* upon his *Father's*  
 “ *throne*, at the right hand of the majesty  
 “ of God; and receiving the *adoration and*  
 “ *thanksgivings* of his church, as the *Alone*  
 “ *Mediator* between God and Men.”

*Brief*

“ *world was.*) But the more plain and literal meaning  
 “ of the words, continues he, is that which has been be-  
 “ fore expressed, No. 535; i. e. that Christ had been in  
 “ a pre-existent state the subordinate creator of all things.”  
 The *true* meaning, however, seems to be that which the  
 Doctor disapproves, and which has been explained above,  
 p. 225, &c. The reader will form his own judgment.

(y) Id. Ibid. p. 375.



*Brief Remarks.*

1. I trust it will have been made evident, that there is to be struck out of this account all that is said about our Lord's *Incarnation*, as it is stiled; or any *humiliation* or merit therein: as some proofs have already, and more might have been offered, from Scripture, that there was no such thing. In any period therefore of the christian dispensation, there could have been no revelation or discovery made, of any *original* glory or dignity that Christ possessed, as he actually had no existence before he was born of *Mary*.

2. There could therefore be no ground for any *distinct worship* of him, on this account, nor indeed on any other, understanding thereby the worship and invocation of him as an invisible Being, who is nevertheless present to hear and to help his worshipers: for no proof can be given of any such worship commanded to be paid, or paid to Christ; and it seems to be a privilege and prerogative preserved in the Scriptures sacred and peculiar to God only.

3. What is asserted also concerning his *exaltation in the human nature*, must be

dropped intirely; if confidered as referring to any *divine nature* in which he had existed before he was born: fince it cannot be fhewn that he had any fuch *two* natures, but the *human* only.

4. Nor have we been able to find any trace in the Scriptures of his *mediatorial kingdom*, in the fenfe intended by Dr. Clarke, *viz.* in which Chrift is to be worfhiped and invoked, not as God, but as a Mediator between God and mankind: no fuch miniftry or mediation having been ever committed to him.

5. Neither does the phrafe, *fitting at the right hand of God, fitting upon his Father's throne*, fignify or imply a ftation and dominion to which he was raifed, and in which he was to be worfhiped and invoked in prayer.

We fuffer ourfelves to be miffed by a too literal interpretation of thefe terms of honour and dignity borrowed from what paffes in this world. But Chrift's *fitting on a throne*, his *exaltation at the right hand of God*, imply *only* the fpredding of his religion by a divine power. But why fhould I fay, *only*; when nothing can be a higher exaltation or glory to any Being, than

than to have been instrumental in bringing the rational creatures of God to virtue and immortal happiness.

We find our Lord saying to his apostles, Luke xxii. 29. *I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;* and in another place, to those christians who bravely suffered for the truth in that first age of our religion; Rev. iii. 21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne:* But we do not thence conclude, that the apostles and martyrs were made objects of adoration and prayer: although the idolatrous practice began in very early times, and still continues throughout a great part of the christian world, and these passages of Scripture were appealed to in support of it.

6. In mentioning Christ receiving the adoration and thanksgivings of his church, as the Mediator between God and men, Dr. Clarke probably refer'd to Rev. v. 12, 13. *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the*  

B b 4
earth,



*earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.*

Here, and ver. 8, 9. we have a visionary representation, in which honour, praise, and worship, are paid to Christ : but then, they are tendered to him present ; and as being *the Lamb that was slain*, on account of his sufferings in the cause of God and his truth, and for the good of men. But no dignity of moral character can constitute him or any other person an object of prayer. Nor does this worship paid to him on that account, present and visible, authorize us to pray to him, unseen and absent. Nothing can bear us out in doing this, but the express command of God to pray to him ; which is nowhere to be found.

The reader will now judge, whether what Dr. *Clarke* remarks in one place, in condemnation of the worship of angels, and Saints viz. *dead christians*, in the church of *Rome*, be not equally applicable to the worship of Christ by himself and other Unitarians. The passage I mean, is as follows ;

“ Every

“ Every attribute of God (says he, *Serm.*  
 “ Vol. ix. p. 443, 8vo.) is a just ground  
 “ and reason of prayer to HIM ; and a suf-  
 “ ficient argument also, why prayer should  
 “ be offered unto HIM *alone*. To pray to  
 “ inferior beings, to angels, or to departed  
 “ saints, as has long been the practice of  
 “ the church of *Rome*, is evidently needless;  
 “ because God, we are sure, is always near,  
 “ being himself every where present.” [*And*  
*is it not equally needless to pray to Christ, for*  
*the same reason ; since we are by no means*  
*sure, that he is near us, or present with us,*  
*so as to be able to hear us ?*]

“ 'Tis moreover (proceeds he) *presumption*,  
 “ and great *vanity* ; an *intruding into things*  
 “ *which men have not seen, being vainly puffed*  
 “ *up by their fleshly mind, and taking upon*  
 “ *themselves to be wise above what is writ-*  
 “ *ten* : for they do not so much as *pretend*,  
 “ that *praying to saints and angels is any*  
 “ *where commanded.*” [*Will not a great*  
*deal of this censure fall very heavy, and justly,*  
*on christians erecting Christ into a new object*  
*of worship, intirely unknown till about 1700*  
*years ago ; and no where prescribed in the*  
*Scriptures ? For neither did Socinus, who*  
*was*

*was so vehement in requiring all christians to pray to Christ, ever pretend, nor does Dr. Clarke assert, nor can any man shew, that praying to Christ is any where commanded.]*

#### SECTION IV.

*Concerning an Appendix on the worship of Jesus Christ, in a Tract called “ A short View of the Tenets of Tritheists, Arians, Socinians, &c.*

**I** Would here step a little out of the order of time, now that we are upon the subject, to take some little notice of an ingenious anonymous writer, who has lately published his thoughts with much candour, on the worship of Christ; and has shewn an inclination to favour it, on this idea of Dr. Clarke's; as being what is due to him from the offices he sustains, of *Mediator*; *High Priest*; *head over all things* to his church; the appointed *Lord* and *future judge* of mankind.

Many



Many seem to me to have gone much beyond the line of Scripture in their account of these other offices of Christ, as has been just now intimated concerning that of *Mediator*; and very unwarrantable inferences have been drawn from them. I shall not now enter upon the discussion; but would observe, that whatever powers and qualifications, however large and dignified, may have been bestowed on Christ, to enable him to fill these offices, we are by no means allowed thence alone to conclude, that the possessor of them is the object of prayer to christians.

This momentous matter of inquiry, *To whom must I direct my prayer*; has not been weighed and examined with that caution and reverence that it ought, by us christians, who are of the race of the heathens; whose ancestors were too much disposed to worship a variety of Beings. The Jewish christians set us a better example. The change of the object of worship and prayer from Almighty God to Jesus Christ, and making the latter a partner and sharer in it, should not have been so slightly made, and taken up, as it has been, without any *direct* authority, upon inferences drawn from uncertain premises,

such

such for instance, as the nature and the extent of the powers committed to Christ; and supported only by some very rare, precarious, doubtful examples, if indeed there be any other than that single address of *Stephen*, so often mentioned and debated.

Something more precise, determinate, and explicit ought surely to have been produced, on which to ground so novel and bold a practice, as that of introducing a *new* Invisible Being, to whom prayer was to be offered; intirely unheard of in the old world before Christ. When also he, our heavenly Teacher, the supposed object of prayer, always prayed to God, *his* Father and *our* Father; and never gave any the most distant directions or instructions concerning the offering up of prayer to himself. For surely, unless men had been before but too much in the habit of multiplying objects of worship, they would never have been so ready to conclude, as so many have done, *Socinus* in particular, as formerly noted, but which I mention again, as I find it still reckoned a capital argument; *viz.* that when Christ, in one place says, (*Job. v. 22, 23.*) *The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that*

*that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not* Joh. v. 22, 23, *does not imply prayer to Christ at all.*

*the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath sent him :* that he, our Lord and Master intended here, that men should honour him, by praying to him, as well as to the Father. Had the Jews his hearers so understood him to speak, they, who were so ready on much slighter occasions to call him a blasphemer, and cast stones at him as such, would not upon such an occasion have been so quiet and patient. Nothing of that kind would occur to them from the expressions (*y*) used, which so plainly intimated, that he was only to be honoured as God's messenger, as the Messiah; nor would it ever have entered into

(*y*) Dr. Clarke in his *Paraphrase*, adopts that of Dr. Clagget; and he could not have followed a better interpreter of Scripture.

Joh. v. 23. "All which things plainly shew, that it is the mind and will of God the Father, that the Son should be honoured with the same faith and obedience which he requires to be paid to himself: So that he who honoureth not the Son (*by believing and obeying him*) dishonoureth the Father, who hath sent him into the world, attested with undeniable evidences of a divine power and authority."



into the imagination of others, if they had not come to the reading of this passage, prepossessed with the notion that Christ was the object of prayer, and glad to lay hold of any thing to support such a favourite doctrine.

The Author of the Tract, which gives rise to these observations, will scarcely himself, I should imagine, on further reflection, approve the following form of devotion, which he puts down as the specimen of a becoming *mediatorial worship* of Christ; (z) and on which I shall bestow a few brief remarks.

“ I worship thee, the most high and independent God.”

*Remark.* These epithets, *most high, independent*, cannot be “ *suitable*, as the author “ proposes they should be, to the character “ and office of Jesus Christ, as Mediator “ *by the appointment of a Superior, as constituted Lord of all things.*” For how can he be stiled *the most high and independent God*, who is the subject and servant of another? What sublimer description also can be given of the Father of Christ, the Creator and

(z) “ A short View of the *Tenets*,” &c. p. 86. Printed for Johnson, St. Paul’s Church-Yard. 1780.

and Father of all, than that he is the *most high and independent God*? Would not this also involve the contradiction of establishing *two most high Gods*?

“ I worship thee—*who hast had judgment*  
 “ *committed to thee, and wast sent ; who wast*  
 “ *exalted, and hast a name given thee above*  
 “ *every name, and that every tongue might*  
 “ *confess thee Lord to the glory of another :*

*Remark.* If, from what is here said of Christ's delegated authority ; of his being the appointed judge of all men at the last day ; of his having a Christ having judgment  
*name, or an authority* committed to him, or a  
*bestowed upon him,* name given him above every  
*paramount to any other* name, or being made  
*messenger of the most* Lord, does not authorize  
praying to him.

high God that ever went before him ; of his being made *Lord*, i. e. constituted the person, whose laws all mankind are to obey : if from hence it be argued, that he is to be the object of christians worship and prayer : there is a very necessary link in the chain of the argument wanting : *viz.* to shew, that God, who invested him with these high powers, has also substituted him in his stead, to hold his place, either constantly  
or

or occasionally, in hearing the prayers of christians. Unless this be proved, and no proof of it has ever appeared; since Christ is acknowledged by Dr. Clarke, by this author, I suppose, and by all other Unitarians, to be the servant of God, and wholly *ministerial* in the use of these powers; we are still to continue to address our devotions, as did our Lord's apostles, to God only; to the *Master* and not the *servant*, as they expressly contradistinguish Christ from the *Sovereign Lord* of all: Δεσπόζα, συ ο Θεος, ο ποιησας τον ουρανόν, και την γην, και την θαλασσαν, και παντα τα εν αύτοις.—δος—σημεία και τεράτια γενεσθαι δια τς ονομαζος τς αγιε παιδος σε Ιησε. i. e. Sovereign master, (or Lord,) *Thou art the God, who hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them.—Grant—that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy servant Jesus. Acts iv. 24, 29, 30.*

“ I worship thee, (continues he) who art  
 “ worshiped by angels, by the command of  
 “ another.”

*Hebrews i. 6.* directs only civil worship to be paid to Christ.

The passage here referred to is, *Hebrews i. 6. But when he again bringeth in the*



*the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him !*

On this passage, (concerning which the learned are much divided, from what part of the Old Testament it is quoted,) Mr. *Perce* well shews, that the author of the epistle, by the phrase, *again bringing into the world*, intends Christ's resurrection. At which time, the extraordinary gifts promised by him in his life time to his followers, and called the *sending of the holy spirit*, were bestowed by Almighty God on the apostles and first christians, for the propagation of the gospel with effect throughout the world; and were probably then, at that time only, under our Lord's direction. And at this juncture it is, that the writer of this epistle cites these words, as being then verified concerning Christ; *Let all the angels of God worship him.*

It may perhaps with some probability be supposed, that this was to intimate, that angels were to be subservient to Christ, and some way or other employed by him in the service of the gospel, during that first age that it was supported by a miraculous

power. Whatever be signified by it, the worship these heavenly beings were to pay to Christ, can go no farther than that respect and obedience which was due to one, so much favoured of God, and so highly exalted by him; and cannot be extended to their making him an object of prayer, an object of that worship which they were wont to give to the Supreme Being. Such an idea and mistake must be owing to the general indiscriminate notion, that to *worship* any one is to *pray* to him; and to the not considering and distinguishing, that *worship* signifies in our language, and according to the usage of the Old and New Testament writers, that inferior respect which any of God's creatures pay to one another, as well as that highest respect and reverence which is due to HIM alone; one part of which seems to be the making him alone the object of prayer.

“ I bow the knee before thee (concludes our author) the *immortal* God  
 “ who *wast slain*, and hast redeemed me to  
 “ God *by thy blood*: to thee be glory for  
 “ ever.”

*Remark.*

*Remark.* It seems not to be quite consistent to call the holy Jesus; the *immortal* God, who immediately after is, by our author himself, said *to be slain*, or put to death. For what was immortal could not die. And St. Paul very justly describes God, as HIM (1 Tim. vi. 16.) *who only hath immortality*. Christ and all other beings hold this privilege only from God as his gift.

I do not wonder that this worthy person, who appears convinced that prayer is to be addressed to Jesus Christ, as a great pre-existent Being, but not *the Supreme*; should nevertheless so frequently stile him *God*; and sometimes be drawn, as in these instances, to speak of him in language that can properly be used only of HIM, who is *the only true* (Joh. xvii. 3.) *God*. It is a natural effect of making him the object of worship, which will imperceptibly raise such high conceptions of his person, as by degrees nearly to equallize him in the imagination of the worshiper, to the sovereign almighty Father

The title of God too familiarly given to Christ by some Unitarians.

C c 2

and



and Creator of all things ; as one error has commonly a train of others following it.

But the application of the term *God*, to Christ, and oftentimes calling him the *true God*, is still more remarkable in *Socinus*, and several of his followers ; as they held him to have been originally nothing more than the Son of Mary, only born of her by the extraordinary power of God, and without a father, as Adam was.

The reader will be curious to see, how *Socinus* maintains that the title of *true God* might be given to Christ, in his reply to some propositions which denied that title to him.

(b) *Proposition i.*

“ The same God whom the hebrew  
“ church worshiped, the christian church  
“ also

(b) “ *Theses de Christo a vera divinitate excludendo, nisi  
fit creator cœli et terræ.*”

“ *Thesis i.*

“ Quem Deum vetus Israëlita colebat ecclesia, hunc  
“ et nostra colit, creatorem scilicet cœli et terræ.”

*Responsio.* “ Conceditur hæc thesis, simpliciter atque  
“ ut ipsa verba sonant, accepta.”

“ *Thesis*

“ also worshipeth ; namely, the creator of  
 “ heaven and earth.”

*Socinus.* “ This is granted, in the most  
 “ plain and literal acceptation of the words.”

*Proposition ii.*

“ Since then the hebrew church owned  
 “ him, viz. the Creator of heaven and earth,  
 “ to be the one only true God : So also does  
 “ the christian church acknowlege HIM to  
 “ be the one only true God ; and none other  
 “ besides him.”

C c 3

*Socinus.*

“ *Thesis 2.*

“ Jam vero, ut illa hunc unum et solum verum esse  
 “ Deum profitebatur, sic et nostra hunc unum et solum  
 “ pro vero Deo agnoscit ; alium vero præterea neminem.”

*Responsio.* “ Si *veri Dei* nomine intelligitur, qui ab  
 “ æterno, et a seipso, sive ex seipso, divinitatem habeat,  
 “ vera est thesis. Si vero is intelligitur, qui *divino im-*  
 “ *perio* et potestate *revera* sit præditus, nequaquam vera  
 “ est thesis. Quamvis enim Israelitica ecclesia nullum  
 “ ejusmodi verum Deum agnoverit, præter creatorem  
 “ cœli et terræ, ecclesia tamen christiana agnoscit ; homi-  
 “ nem videlicet illum, Jesum Nazarenum, qui dictus est  
 “ Christus, sub Augusto Tiberioque imperatoribus Ro-  
 “ manis, demum ac primum natum, et mundo exhibitum  
 “ ac patefactum, divinamque istam majestatem ab ipso  
 “ creatore cœli et terræ adeptum.” *Socini Opera*, Vol. i.  
 p. 285.

*Socinus*: “ If by the term, *true God*, be  
 “ understood the eternal, self-existent Being;  
 “ the proposition is true. But if by it be  
 “ understood, one who hath a *true divine*  
 “ power and dominion ; it is not true. For  
 “ though the hebrew church knew no such  
 “ true God, but him who was the creator  
 “ of heaven and earth : The christian church  
 “ acknowledges *another true God* ; namely,  
 “ the man Jesus of Nazareth, called the  
 “ Christ, who at length, (after having been  
 “ long expected) in the reigns of the em-  
 “ perors Augustus and Tiberius, was first  
 “ born, exhibited, and made known to the  
 “ world, and had then this *divine majesty*  
 “ bestowed upon him, by the Creator of  
 “ heaven and earth.”

I shall subjoin only one instance more out of the Letters of *Ruarus*, a learned and excellent person, of great note among the Socinians in Germany in the last century, and connected with the principal literary characters of his time.

He is writing to an intimate friend, who had sent him word after he had quitted *Altorf* in Germany, where he had read theological lectures ; that he was accused of hav-  
 ing



ing been a “deserter of their sacred institutions, a sower of impiety, and corrupter of the youth of the place;” by which they meant, that he had been instrumental in leading them off from the received doctrines, to the belief of the *Divine Unity*.

In his answer, Ruarus congratulates himself, that “he had made it his great endeavour, “that no one should become worse by associating with him;” and observes, “that perhaps the principal thing his adversaries had to lay to his charge, was, that he had opposed the corrupt manners of the times; in which he declares, he had laboured with all his might:” and “I rejoice, says he, (c) that I have this crime, if it be one, in common *with you*, my friend, and *with all good men, with the holy apostles*, and *with my Lord and God, Jesus Christ himself*.” And he concludes his letter;

“May the *Lord Jesus, who is God over all blessed for ever*, pardon my dulness.—

C c 4 To

(c) “Si hoc est crimen meum, sæculo contrāivisse, id mihi tecum ipso commune lætor, et cum omnibus viris probis, cum sanctis apostolis, cum ipso Domino ac Deo meo, Jesu Christo ———. M. Ruari Epistolæ. Vol. ii. p. 86.

“ To whose care I heartily commend you,  
 “ my dear *Piccart*, and all your’s.”

*Paris, January, 1616. (d)*

It

(d) Not long after this, viz. in the year 1619, we find *Ruarus* was in our own country; where he had great offers made him to settle at Cambridge: a Professorship, with a salary of upwards of 100l. a year, together with an establishment in some college; the liberty also of taking pupils, which would at the least bring in a 100l. more: “ A great temptation, says he to his friend, to a  
 “ man like me, in indigent circumstances, and one who  
 “ scarce ever felt the smiles of fortune; especially, when  
 “ there was a way pointed out to me, whereby I might  
 “ make myself easy in some measure, in point of consci-  
 “ ence, in discharging the duties of my place; which  
 “ was a circumstance I had good reason to be alarmed  
 “ about. But the love of liberty got the better of all  
 “ these allurements, for I saw I must be intirely fettered  
 “ in many respects: or rather, it was the love of that  
 “ best and greatest of Beings, which prevailed; whom  
 “ I resolved not to serve by stealth, but ingenuously  
 “ and openly in the face of the world.”——i. e.  
 “ Non mentiar, mi Dumlere! gravis hæc fuit machina  
 “ ad oppugnandam constantiam hominis egeni, et qui  
 “ fortunæ benignitatem vix unquam hæcenus gustavit:  
 “ præsertim cum aliqua monstraretur ratio, qua con-  
 “ scientiam animi, cui non obscure metuebam, quo-  
 “ modocunque salvam mihi tuerer. Vicit tandem in  
 “ me libertatis amor, cui quodammodo compedes illic  
 “ parari videbam; seu potius ipsius Dei ter optimi  
 “ maximi, cui ingenue servire statui, nec suffurari pieta-  
 “ tem, quæ cœlo teste exercere debet.——Lutetiæ,  
 Parisi.

It seems an idle play upon words in Soci-nus, in the instance alleged from him, to argue that the title of *true God* might be given to Christ; when all he meant by it was, that he had a *real divine* power and dominion bestowed upon him, to qualify him to take care of the concerns of christi-ans, and to hear and answer their prayers, though he was originally nothing more than a human creature.

Mr. *Boyle*, that honour to our country and to human nature, is reported to have always made a short pause in his conver-sation, very discernible to those that were acquainted

Paristorum, 1609. *M. Ruari* Epistolæ, Vol. I. p. 71.  
A greater liberality of sentiment this, in the Heads of Col-leges, and a more ingenuous love and encouragement of the free study of the holy Scriptures, than we have seen exemplified in the same University in our own days; when men, *two* persons in particular, of the most unspotted virtue, of very superior learning and abilities, instead of being countenanced in expounding the Scriptures of truth in their genuine sense and meaning, have been opposed and forced to discontinue their labours, and quit those seats of learning, for not submitting to twist and explain those sacred oracles in conformity to certain articles estab-lished by human authority. So much less favourable is that public Seminary of youth now to the progress of chris-tian truth, than it was 150 years ago.



acquainted with him, whenever he had occasion to mention the name of *God*: Certainly Unitarians ought to be more sparing and reserved in the use of a name peculiarly belonging to the unspeakably glorious creator of all things; and which can only be figuratively given to Christ, or to any other person. *Ruarus*, in the way in which he joins Christ with himself and other men, plainly considers him merely as a human being; and I can no other way account for his calling him *his God*, in such a familiar way, but from his having accustomed himself to pray to him. But to other Unitarians it is strange language. They would say that they think it an high honour and felicity to be able to call Christ *their Lord*. For he himself, with a proper sense of the dignity of his own character, said in one place (Joh. xiii. 13.) to his disciples, *Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well, for so I am*. But they cannot go on to call him, *their God*. For they have no God but one, the God and Father of all; the same also whom Christ acknowledged (Joh. xx. 17.) to be *his God and Father*. And that the apostle Thomas did not intend Christ himself, when upon ocular demon-

demonstration of his being raised from the dead, he broke out into those words, (Joh. xx. 28.) *my Lord and my God*; has been too often shewn to need being repeated here.

## S E C T I O N IV.

### *Of Bishop Hoadly.*

WE may lament, but we should not be severe in our comments on the conduct of those, who having stood forth against the corruptions of the divine truth of the gospel, have stopt short all at once, and have not proceeded to act consistently with their sentiments and declarations, as *we imagine* they ought to have done.

If that excellent person, Dr. *Clarke*, did not refrain from taking part and joining in the worship of the church of England, in its Liturgy, a very important and main portion of which he did not approve; that is, all those prayers and addresses which are made to Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit,

and not to God; he is not to be blamed by us for what he did. For how often do we meet with persons, otherwise able and discerning, who do not draw the consequences from their opinions, which to indifferent judges seem almost self-evident; and therefore are not at all influenced by them?

The same apology must be made for his friend Bp. *Hoadly*; although he had not the courage to go so far as the Rector of St. *James's*, in avowing his antitrinitarian sentiments, which were as little questionable. They are indeed sufficiently set forth, with regard to the subject of religious worship which we are discussing, in those his fine devotional compositions, published at the end of his "*Plain Account of the nature and end of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.*" For in these we find no intimation in the most remote degree, that Jesus Christ was to be invoked in prayer; nor example of any divine worship addressed to him: but to the Father only. Now if the Bishop had believed Christ to have been an object of worship to christians, it is hardly to be supposed, that in set forms of prayer, drawn up with great care and deliberation, he should have  
taken



taken no notice of him in that character; especially if it be considered which way the popular fashionable doctrine leaned, and the prejudices of many against him on other accounts.

In one place, he thus discovers his sentiments concerning the object of worship, as well as the disposition with which we ought to pray. (a) “ *Visit, with a more especial*  
 “ *grace and favour, the whole christian*  
 “ *world; all who are called by the name*  
 “ *of thy Son, and profess his holy religion.*  
 “ *Behold O LORD, a large scene of spiritual*  
 “ *evils, worthy of thy gracious and merci-*  
 “ *ful interposition:—In many places—*  
 “ *the worship of THEE, O FATHER, ex-*  
 “ *pressly established by thy Son Jesus Christ,*  
 “ *in spirit and in truth, is overclouded by*  
 “ *numberless superstitions; and even destroyed*  
 “ *by idolatry itself.*”

In these forms of prayer, it is very remarkable, that the author never closes them with requesting any thing of God, *for Christ's sake*; which indeed is wholly unscriptural

(a) Appendix to a Plain Account—of the Lord's Supper. 12mo. p. 208.

language.

language. Nor does he ever drop any expression, which might be construed into a supposition, that it was upon Christ's account, for *his* interposing and mediating in our behalf, that God was propitious and merciful to us; but he always speaks, in agreement with the sacred writings, and as a *strict Unitarian*, that the God and Father of all was of himself ever inclined to overlook and pardon the offences of his frail creatures on their repentance, and to do them good; and wanted not Christ or any other person to interfere and dispose him to it. His language on this head is as follows:

p. 183. *I intreat of Thee alone, as the Father and judge of mankind, the pardon of every wilful transgression and omission of my duty, through my whole life. I beg this upon those terms only, which the holiness of Thy nature, and the declarations of Jesus Christ, have marked out to us.*

p. 193. *Pardon me, O LORD, according to the abundant goodness of Thy nature, and the declarations made by thy Son Jesus Christ; and grant me that forgiveness, which I neither ask nor expect, but upon those terms*  
and

and conditions which thy holiness and mercy have laid down *in his gospel*.

The Bishop indeed afterwards adopts some of the prayers of the Liturgy, which conclude with petitioning God *for Christ's sake*; and admits another prayer, which ends thus—*through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory world without end.*

But these are among those inconsistent things, which we know not how to reconcile. Nothing of the kind appears in the prayers of his own composing; nor in them does he ever ascribe glory to Christ or the Holy Ghost, as Divine Persons, or in any sort put them upon a level with the Almighty Father.

This one thing we may be allowed to say, without just offence to the living; or injury to the dead, who cannot defend themselves: that a conformity to the worship of two other Divine Persons together with the One true God and Father of all, which apparently (*b*) was not their own choice, in  
men

(*b*) The following address of a very valuable and useful writer, may very seasonably be applied here; and it would  
be



men like Dr. *Clarke* and Bp. *Hoadly*, eminent for their stations, learning and many virtues; in what way soever they might qualify it and think themselves justified in it, with which we have no concern; has much hindered the spreading of the knowledge of the Divine Unity; and their example also has shed

be well, if this or any thing might induce men to pay more attention to the important subject.

“ Were you engaged to draw up forms of prayer for christian societies, would you insert in them these petitions and thanksgivings, in which you yourselves could not join, as not being agreeable to the divine rule? Is it more consistent with godly sincerity, to *adopt* such already drawn up by others? Doth not integrity of character, as well as reverence for God’s word, remonstrate against it? In private devotions, when you are left perfectly to your own judgment and choice, do you, if you be *Unitarians*, worship according to *Trinitarian* sentiments, and in *Trinitarian* language? For what reason do you discard it, but because your judgment is convinced that it is erroneous; and this being your conviction, you would worship the *Father* only, with the language of sincerity and truth? And will the circumstance of the worship being public and social afford sufficient reason for dispensing with sincerity and truth?”

“ A free and serious Address to the christian laity, especially such as embracing *Unitarian* sentiments conform to *Trinitarian* worship.” p. 64.

shed a baneful influence upon many, in stopping honest inquiry through deference to their authority, and made others, to acquiesce, as themselves appear to have done, in praying to Those as Divine Persons in the public congregation, whom they never addressed in their closets; not looking upon them as gods, or to be worshiped.

## SECTION IV.

Of Sir *Isaac Newton*.

**W**HETHER Sir *Isaac Newton*, Dr. *Clarke*'s great friend, was of the *Arian* sentiment concerning the preexistence of Christ, which was that which the Doctor embraced; or rather believed his proper humanity, is differently thought of. I have mentioned in another place (*b*) some evidence of his being of the latter opinion. That he was however an *Unitarian* (*c*) christian, altho' he conformed to the end of his life to the public *Trinitarian* worship, there can be no doubt.

D d                      And

(*b*) See "A Sequel to the Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick," p. 18, 19.

(*c*) Historical Memoirs of the Life of Dr. Clarke by Mr. Whiston, p. 8.

And though we might wish it had been otherwise, we must not take upon us to censure or condemn, where we have no concern, and are not judges; but only to take care, that no authority, however respectable, mislead us.

It seems to have been owing to his natural shyness, and modesty, and fear of being drawn into controversy, that this most eminent person never openly declared his sentiments on this important subject, in his life-time; and rather insinuated them indirectly in those writings which were published afterwards. I find however that some who lived nearer those times, ascribed this prodigious reserve to a blameable timidity and fear of persecution. For the anonymous author of a pamphlet of some repute, who wrote about 20 years after Sir *Isaac*'s death, having mentioned Mr. *Emlyn*'s sufferings in this cause, proceeds to say: This persecuting spirit (*d*) “ kept in awe, and silenced  
 “ some extraordinary persons amongst us,  
 “ *Sir Peter King, Sir Joseph Jekyll*, and  
 “ the greatest man of the age and glory of  
 “ the British nation, I mean, the renowned  
 “ *Sir*

(*d*) *Causa Dei contra Novatores, &c.* p. 31. 58. London, 1748.



“ *Sir Isaac Newton.*” After which he points to Sir Isaac’s *then unpublished* discourse, or dissertation (e) upon the pretended text of 1 John, v. 7, 8. as an instance of this excessive caution. This dissertation has now been long before the public, demonstrating the spuriousness of those words—*in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth; (f)* and shewing that they were by degrees either fraudulently inserted into the text for proving the Trinity; or else, without any ill design, taken from some note in the margin of a manuscript, which had been put there by way of interpretation of the apostle’s own words, which are only these: *For there are three that bear record, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood: and these three agree in One.*

*How long, after such frequent admonitions and remonstrances of Mr. Emlyn, Dr. Clarke, Dr. Jortin, Sir Isaac Newton,*

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*and*

(e) Two Letters of Sir Isaac Newton to Mr. Le Clerc; —on 1 Joh. v. 7. 1 Tim. iii. 16. London, 1754.

(f) See “Critical Conjectures of Mr. Bowyer, in loc.”

*and others; how long will this adulterated text of the three witnesses in heaven, be still continued in our English Bibles, printed by authority; and mislead the ignorant and unwary, in a matter of so much importance, as what relates to the true God and object of worship!*

## SECTION V.

*Of the Author of "The Light of Nature pursued," &c.*

**I** MUST dwell somewhat longer on the writings and conduct of a very excellent person, not long since gone to rest; whom Divine Providence had deprived for a few years before his death, of this outward light of sun, moon, and stars, by which we contemplate the beautiful visible world; but recompensed with a double portion of inward illumination of his holy truth; which, as he sincerely sought for, his prayer was heard:

"So much the rather, Thou, celestial light,

"Shine

“ Shine inward, and the mind through all her power’s

“ Irradiate !” —————

’ Milton, B. iii.

The author of “ The Light of Nature pursued,” a gentleman of easy independent fortune, bred at one of our Inns of court, of large acquaintance with men and things, in publishing that work, indifferent to fame so that he might but benefit mankind, chose rather to drop his own name (*g*) and attract the attention of the public by assuming that of Edward Search, Esq; suited to his labour and design.

In the execution of his purpose, sometimes in graver mood, but more commonly, especially in his former volumes, alluring his reader in more lively and chearful strains to travel along with him, he traverses large tracts of ground in the mental world, little trodden before; and in trying what man by this self-inquiry and exercise could attain to, has struck out a vast variety of knowledge and useful truths concerning the Great Creator, his ways, and designs only of good

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for

(*g*) His name was added to the four last volumes of his work, published after his death.



for his creature man, and scattered many holy lessons of important information, for the improvement of the mind and heart, and for direction in our pilgrimage through this world to a better ; especially in inculcating that glorious truth, that *all things flow from and are constituted by the will and appointment, and are under the absolute, unerring guidance and direction of a Being of boundless wisdom, power and goodness, the benevolent parent of the universe, and are tending to and will not fail of terminating in the virtue and final endless happiness of all his rational offspring.*

*Abraham Tucker (b) Esq; of Beachworth-castle, near Darking, Surrey, (for such was*  
our

(b) He was the son of Mr. *Tucker*, merchant in *Sisef-lane, London*, and educated at Bishop-Stortford school, Hertfordshire, under Dr. *Tooke* ; where he made good progress : rather reserved and sparing of speech, but a boy of humour and facetious ; dispositions that remained with him through life, (the latter are particularly conspicuous in his writings,) and which rendered him most chearful and agreeable in the circle of his friends and acquaintance, though somewhat silent among strangers. From school he removed to Oxford, and thence to chambers in the Inner Temple ; where he studied the law, not with a view to practice, but to qualify himself for future usefulness as  
a good

our author's name and family-seat in the country) was a sincere christian, and also a firm believer of the *Divine Unity*. But we have to regret, that instead of exerting his endeavours, as might have been expected, in exploding the customary unscriptural language concerning the Deity, which creates and countenances the belief of *three persons being each of them* God, and a separate object of worship; he became an advocate for retaining the *trinitarian* forms in the service of

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a good citizen, and particularly to act as a magistrate in the country. In which character he was afterwards eminently useful.

About 1735, he married Miss Barker, only daughter, but not only child of Edward Barker, Esq; afterwards Cursitor Baron of the Exchequer. To her he was an excellent husband; as he was indeed good in every relation of life, and highly and justly respected by all that knew him. His sight became gradually impaired; but he was deprived of it intirely, only three or four years before he died; and yet under this great impediment, he composed, and by a very ingenious and simple contrivance, was able to write down himself the greater part of the latter volumes of his work, which came out after his death. This happened in the year 1776.

His daughter, a valuable lady, who survives him, was wont, like the famous Milton's, to read the *Greek Testament* to her father when he was blind.

the church of which he was member, by labouring all he could to put an *unitarian* sense upon them.

To this however he was not led by any mean worldly motives, but by groundless fears of unhinging and disturbing the minds of ordinary christians who were addicted to such forms; thinking that it would shake their belief of and regard for every thing that relates to God and a future world, if they were to be told, that there had been such grievous mistakes, and of so very ancient a date, concerning the object of christian worship, “ How little soever (says “ he, in one place, *vol. vii. p. 143.*) the “ *Athanasian* subtleties may add to the stock “ of useful knowlege, yet if you teach the “ plain man to regard them as impositions, “ he will think himself imposed upon in “ other things too, and practise sobriety and “ honesty no farther than to escape the lash “ of the law, or the censures of the world.”

But it should have been remembered, that Christ enjoins his followers openly to *confess him before men*, (*Matth. x. 32, 33.*) i. e. without reserve to maintain and declare the truth he taught, and for no consideration to  
conceal



conceal or disguise it, or countenance the corruption of it, under the penalty of being *denied* and disowned by him at the last, *before the heavenly Father*. Neither is it true, that we run any risque of loosening men's regards for religion, by shewing them that they are to learn it from the Bible, and not from the words of *Athanasius*. And besides, in discharging our duty, and publishing honestly and unreservedly what the gospel teaches concerning God and the worship and honour due to HIM alone, we may repose ourselves in HIM, that no harm will ensue but good.

In another place, (vol. vii. p. 94.) speaking of *the apprehensions of the vulgar about the Trinity*, he says; “ It is a very prudent  
 “ and honest caution to revere the mystery  
 “ without prying curiously into it; and you  
 “ do them a real injury by putting them  
 “ upon comparisons of their ideas, unless  
 “ their christianity be a mischief to them;  
 “ which it would be difficult to prove; for  
 “ you must either deprive them of the benefit received from that, or *endanger their*  
 “ *disbelieving the UNITY of God, that grand*  
 “ *fundamental article both of natural and*  
 “ *revealed religion.*”

But

But if the vulgar, great and small, were taught the knowlege of God, from the sacred writings only, there would be no need of any of this left-handed caution in instructing them; as *the unity* of God is no mystery there; but a plain doctrine. And surely it is high time to get rid of human articles grafted on the gospel, which thus, to say the least, *endanger* men's belief, as our author frankly owns, of the *Unity of God, that grand and fundamental article both of natural and revealed religion*, as he well defines it. From such glossing and varnishing of these corruptions, and not bearing open and continual testimony against them; it has come to pass, that Christendom in general, with some few exceptions, is, at this day, bowing the knee to and worshiping, together with the God and Father of all, *the only true* God, two other persons, of equal power and perfections, each of them called God; who yet are no Gods, nor were ever heard of as Divine Beings, till the heathens, on their embracing the gospel, began to corrupt it with their former idolatrous notions and vain philosophy.

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Our author's plan and example then, if universally adopted and followed, would prove of most pernicious consequence, in preventing the reformation of these *polytheistic* doctrines; a reformation so earnestly to be desired for the honour and success of the gospel itself, and also for the ease and quiet of thousands in all countries, who suffer under the imposition of them; and who have not fallen upon, or can ill satisfy themselves with those expedients, by which learned men and metaphysicians seek to pacify their scruples, in their use of and attendance upon forms of worship, which in their plain direct meaning they would reject and condemn.

This will appear by the ingenious contrivances and refinements to which Mr. *Tucker* is reduced; and the new and different sense which he finds it necessary to affix to his words, from that which they commonly bear.

Being fully convinced, that to say *three persons are one God*, in the common signification of the word *person*, as denoting an intelligent agent, was a contradiction, because it would be to assert, that *three intelligent*



*ligent Beings are one intelligent Being; or, as he himself pleasantly expresses it, (vol. vii. p. 96, 97.) that number three is number one: he therefore takes up another meaning of the word person, by which he makes it to signify, not a living agent, but a character of one. And thus his Trinity comes out to be nothing more than a triple description of one and the same God, in his different operations; or the Supreme Being acting in three different characters, to which he assigns the terms, Father, Son, Spirit. But let us hear himself.*

I shall take the liberty to transcribe a paragraph or two that precede the passage, the better to introduce it; and to give a sample of the author's excellent sense and deep thought.

“ In the chapter of Providence, says Mr. Tucker, I have shewn it be agreeable with our ideas of the Deity, to imagine that he might once for all have given his work of universal nature so perfect a constitution, as that it might have run on its appointed course for ever, without needing any farther application of his power: On the other hand, that it was not inconsistent

sistent with those ideas, to suppose him *purposely to have framed his laws of nature in such a manner as to require his own interpositions; which are not sudden expedients to connect unforeseen deficiencies in his design, but predetermined, and comprized in the original plan together with the operations of second causes.*"

" Having thus found the divine interposition alike probable in theory, both on the negative and affirmative sides; I proceeded to examine, whether it might be determined by the contemplation of visible nature; and could find no evidence of an interposition later than the formation of the planetary system, and of this earth which we inhabit: since when, so far as the eye of human reason can discern, all things both in the natural and moral world have gone on by the stated rules governing the motions of bodies, and actions of free agents. Nevertheless the field still remains open for such evidence as can be produced of further interposition, and it becomes us to give the divines a fair hearing of such evidence as they do produce. It is not my business *to examine the weight* of their evidence: I have  
taken

taken no more upon me than *to attempt a clearer understanding of what they say*, than hitherto has been commonly had, so that we may comprehend what it is we are to receive, or reject.

“ *They tell us, that God created the matter, and gave the form of this visible nature we behold; thus much we knew before. But they tell us likewise, that HE has interposed many times since, by miracles, prophecies, and revelations; that HE united himself to one particular man, so as to become the same person with him from his birth;*” (N. B. *This and some other that follows, may be the language of Divines, but it is not that of the SCRIPTURES; although it is capable of an Unitarian sense, which is that which Mr. Tucker intended*) “ that he frequently cooperates with our endeavours to discover truths, and perform good works we could not have done without such aid; that these operations were performed by three (Personæ) *Persons* in one God, not jointly, but each having a distinct share in them: *The union with manhood, and all done in virtue of that union, was the work of the SON: The assistance afforded occasionally to men in general,*



*neral, was the province of the holy Spirit; and all the rest, of the FATHER."*

“ By the distinct manners of operation, proceeds our Author, *God appears to act in three characters*, easily separable from one another, in our conception; but joining mutually in advancement of the general design, and executing the principle strokes in the plan of Providence, respecting the moral world. *The Father* acted in the plan of King or Governor, controuling the courses of nature and actions of second causes by immediate exertions of his power; and by his signs and wonders prepared the minds of men for reception of the benefits imparted by the other two. *The Son* acted in the character of a co-agent or partner, not controuling the mental or bodily powers of Jesus, but adding a force and vigour which could not have been furnished by natural causes; supplied what had been left deficient in the plan of Providence, and rendered mankind capable of reaping advantages from the effusion of the Holy Spirit. This last (*the Holy Spirit*) acts in the character of a friend and monitor, not working with the power and majesty of a monarch, not dwelling inseparably

rably with the mind of man, but imperceptibly throwing in assistance from time to time, as wanted, and thereby filling up the last lines of the divine plan." Vol. vii. p. 111 to 114.

In a following part of his work, referring to the above, he thus expresses his meaning: "that it was the same indivisible almighty Being, who governs all nature as also the affairs of men by his ordinary and extraordinary Providence; *who took upon him our nature by an union with the human soul and body of Jesus, and who works occasionally upon our hearts to will and to do according to his good pleasure*: That HE did not thereby become *three different Beings or Substances, having transactions with one another; but assumed the appearance of three Persons, or characters, each having a separate office and distinct province of action.*"

I have quoted these passages from our author, in which he delivers himself most intelligibly, according to this new mode of interpretation. But how difficult is it for many to understand him even here; when he characterizes God, as being *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, and speaks of the *Son not controuling*

*trouling the mental or bodily powers of Jesus, &c.*? How much better would it have been, if instead of adopting the Platonic scholastic language of Divines, of *three Persons constituting one God*, and attempting to reconcile with the Scriptures what they have nothing to do with; he had discarded such terms intirely? One wonders also he did not recollect, that however *he might*, in his own mind, define the word, *Person*, and put his own *unitarian* sense upon it: yet in the *Athanasian* creed, and in the acts of devotion in the *Litany* formed upon it, and addressed severally to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, there is much more than what he calls the *appearance of three Persons or Characters*; there are three *real Persons*, three *several intelligent Beings* spoken to and addressed in prayer, each actually bearing a separate office and distinct province of action. Vol. viii. p. 199, 200.

In going on afterwards to explain what he meant, in *God taking our nature upon him by an union with the human soul and body of Jesus*; after some very inexplicable language, he brings it out at last, to be only *an union*



*of the same kind which others of mankind have with God; though in a far less degree.*

“ Neither, says he, is the term *uniting*  
 “ (i. e. *union with God*) or other expression  
 “ of similar import, withholden from the  
 “ regenerate christian: of whom it is said,  
 “ *the Father shall come unto him, and make*  
 “ *his abode with him, and dwell in him, and*  
 “ *that he shall receive power to be one of the*  
 “ *Sons of God.*” “ From all which (he re-  
 “ marks) may be gathered, that the appli-  
 “ cation of the Deity to every sanctified be-  
 “ liever, *was the same in kind to that of*  
 “ *Jesus; but immensely inferior in degree,*  
 “ *and temporary.*” Vol. viii. p. 201.

In the next page, (202.) recapitulating this account of the doctrine of the New Testament concerning Christ, he says; “ It  
 “ appears, that Jesus was a real man, like  
 “ unto us in all respects, sin only excepted;  
 “ and that *the Divinity united to him, which*  
 “ *together with his human soul and body com-*  
 “ *posed one Christ, was the Supreme Being*  
 “ *substantially and inseparably present with*  
 “ *him, supplying all imperfections in the*  
 “ *created parts.*” How much is it to be  
 lamented that this worthy and sensible chris-  
 tian

tian should adopt such language as that here marked in Italics, from which common readers will imagine our Lord to be something very different from what he himself thought him to be? For all he intended by it was, that *the man*, Christ Jesus, had extraordinary powers and assistances from God, above all other men.

It would not be fair thus to pass sentence on our author's endeavours to exhibit the *Athanasian* Trinity in an *Unitarian* light, without giving him leave to make his apology for it in his own words; which he thus offers in one place, with that unassuming modesty and good humour that seem natural to him.

“ And now I have done my best towards explaining this most mysterious article of the doctrines taught in our church. I hope I shall not be suspected of a secret intention to undermine the foundations of religion, nor yet to mislead, or impose any thing upon the consciences of men. But it will be seen, that my purpose was nothing more than an honest attempt to put a rational and intelligible construction upon the words delivered, without pronouncing upon the truth

or falshood of the matter contained therein, when clearly understood. For I would be considered as a commentator, not as a judge: I pretend to no authority, nor extraordinary skill in divinity, therefore lie under no temptation to conclude with ; *This is the catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.*" Vol. vii. p. 128, 129.

*Examples of the Author's speaking of Christ, and of explaining the Scriptures, exactly in the manner of Unitarians.*

## i.

*Jesus was the Son of God, in the same way as the rest of mankind, though more highly favoured.*

“ The word *begotten* (says Mr. Tucker,) we find often employed in Scripture, but used figuratively, — and belonging originally to the *man* Jesus; whom St. Luke proves to be the Son of God, by deriving his genealogy from *Adam*, (Luke iii. 38.) *who was the Son of God. In this sense we are all so too*: for although we cannot trace

our



our genealogy, there is no doubt of our being lineally descended from Adam, *who was the Son of God*. But Jesus was called by way of eminence *the Son of God*;—and the *Son of Man*, as being the promised seed appointed by particular designation of Providence, to restore the whole race of men from their fallen state of perdition.” Vol. vii. p. 117, 118.

## ii.

*Christ wrought miracles by the same power as Moses, and in the same way.*

“ We may suppose Christ worked miracles as Moses and the prophets did, by the power of the Father accompanying him, not imparted to him.——For he did not claim the powers he appeared to exert as his own, but ascribed the glory of them to the Father. He said (*Job. v. 17.*) *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*. His own share was no more than to discern the proper times when miracles would be worked, and (*e*) to call for them.” p. 120.

E c 3

iii.

(*e*) This is a just remark. Our Saviour appears always to have sought by prayer for the divine assistance in working miracles. See *Job. xi. 41, 42.*

## iii.

*A general account of the beginning of St John's gospel.*

“ The *Word* or *Logos* being frequently applied to Christ as a title or proper name, has induced many to believe it contained something mysterious, expressive of certain qualities or powers peculiar to him : and because *Logos* signified either a *word spoken*, or the *faculty of reason*, they conceived of the word as something analagous to the *Nous* or second *Hypostatis* of Plato, and made the *Person* (*Persona*) to whom it belonged, the Demiourgos or Maker of the world ; confirmed herein by an expression of St. John's ; *By him all things were made, and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

“ I am not theologian enough to undertake the exposition of that text : perhaps it may mean that the whole plan of Providence was formed with a reference to the part he should act in it, and without such reference not a single stroke was drawn of all those multitudes that were drawn. But I believe now the literal sense is not holden orthodox ; at least I have not happened to meet with any person of repute in the church so under-

understanding it since *Beveridge*; who might be as good a man as ever lived, but certainly not the most judicious." Id. Ibid. p. 122, 123.

## iv.

*How Christ had glory with the Father before the world was.* John xvii. 5.

Although somewhat enveloped in scholastic Trinitarian terms, Mr. *Tucker* explains it to be a glory, not actually possessed, but designed for Christ before the world was. "For God, says he, might from all eternity have designed and laid out the plan he was to execute in time; and have contemplated the gracious and glorious purposes He was to execute by Christ." p. 128.

How well our Author could explain and illustrate the Scriptures when he did not look upon himself bound to pay such deference to the language which human authority had consecrated as it were and established before him, will be read by many with pleasure in the following quotations.

On *Redemption*.

"Perhaps (says he) it will be thought lessening our obligations to the Saviour, to suppose him effecting our *redemption* with-



out hurt to himself, and representing it as an act of prudence, which his wisdom must shew him was expedient for his own sake, no less than for the sake of his fellow-members: *for Jesus had a soul to be saved as well as we, and did save it together with ours.*"

" To this objection I shall answer, in the  
 " first place, that I am justified in this re-  
 " presentation by the writer to the *Hebrews*,  
 " who tells us (*Hebr.* xii. 2.) that Jesus,  
 " for the (*f*) joy that was set before him,  
 " endured

(*f*) Mr. Joseph Hallet, the worthy and learned Continuator of Peirce's unfinished Paraphrase and Notes on the epistle to the *Hebrews*, enlarges upon this passage of *Hebr.* xii. 2. as follows: " who, for the sake of obtaining the reward of joy and glory, and exaltation to be lord of all, which was promised him, and presented to his view, was contented to endure all the pains of crucifixion, which was the condition of his receiving this reward." Misled by little ideas of glory and honour among men, and conceiving wrong of the Scripture language in that respect concerning Christ, our author undesignedly lowers the character of Jesus, and the motives from which he acted. Throughout the Scriptures, the glory which he fought, *the exaltation at the right hand of God*, which was proposed to him, was not, as has been before observed, any splendor or dignity annexed to his own person, which gave him pleasure and animated him to such heroic deeds of virtue and obedience to God; but it was *the spreading of the divine truth of the gospel originally*

“ endured the cross, despising the shame ;  
 “ that is, he acted for his own interest joint-  
 “ ly with ours.” Vol. vii. p. 171.

p. 173. “ It would be impious to ima-  
 “ gine the organs of Jesus rendered insen-  
 “ sible, or that he did not feel the same  
 “ weight of anguish,——when he cried out,  
 “ *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken*  
 “ *me ?* as any of us should have done in the  
 “ like situation : but that weight was over-  
 “ balanced by the contemplation of his own  
 “ interest being involved in that of the cre-  
 “ ation, and by the joy of opening a pas-  
 “ sage, whereby all mankind might arrive  
 “ at the like tranquillity of mind under the  
 “ severest pressures.”

“ This brings me to inquire, in what  
 “ manner the sufferings of the Redeemer  
 “ operated to our benefit : and I apprehend  
 “ it to have been, not by taking off any  
 “ service we were destined to perform for  
 “ the

*nally by his means, and the bringing of all mankind to the ac-  
 knowledgement of it, and to be made eternally happy by it.*  
 This was his joy; that by which he was encouraged in de-  
 voting himself to death in the cause of the gospel; appointed  
 by God to be the grand instrument by which this glorious  
 end and event is accomplishing, and will be accomplished.  
 And the prospect of it might well support his pious and  
 virtuous mind through the dreadful conflict.

“ the benefit of the universe, for this would  
 “ be sacrificing the general interest to the  
 “ advantage of a few ; nor by working a  
 “ change in the constitution of human na-  
 “ ture, for this would look like something  
 “ of a charm or magic ; nor yet by turning  
 “ the purposes of God from resentment to  
 “ mercy, for this would be to represent him  
 “ liable to passion and mutability : but by  
 “ setting an example, which might lead us  
 “ into the method of performing the hardest  
 “ of our services, with the same tranquil-  
 “ lity and satisfaction of mind that he did.”

*On imputed righteousness, and Christ's me-  
 diation and intercession.*

p. 176. “ From hence we may see, the  
 “ imputation of righteousness ; the media-  
 “ tion and intercession for sinners still con-  
 “ tinuing such, are only figurative expres-  
 “ sions, to denote that we derive our righte-  
 “ ousness from Christ, and are enabled by  
 “ the medium of his example and aids, to  
 “ fulfil the laws of nature, which were im-  
 “ practicable to us before. Yet still the  
 “ righteousness must be actually derived to  
 “ ourselves and become our own, before it  
 “ can be imputed to us : and though he has  
 “ rendered



“ rendered the way passable by going before  
 “ us, we must travel it after him with our  
 “ own feet, or shall never arrive at our  
 “ journey’s end: We may expect to be  
 “ *helped* forwards, but not carried, for any  
 “ the most pressing repeated importunities  
 “ whatsoever. Therefore, our trust, our  
 “ devotion, and our religious exercises, will  
 “ not commute for the want of that righ-  
 “ teousness which is the sole operating  
 “ cause of our salvation, and which we may  
 “ now attain by derivation from him. Nor  
 “ are they of any other avail than for the  
 “ effect they may have upon ourselves to-  
 “ wards generating in us the like moral  
 “ wisdom, as exemplified by our leader, in  
 “ the ready resistance of pleasure, desire, and  
 “ temptation, and unreluctant endurance of  
 “ the severest trials.”

“ The sum of our imitation then, and  
 “ the substance of our duty, is the same  
 “ with what was comprized by the old  
 “ philosophers in two words, BEAR and  
 “ FORBEAR. But they could only tell us  
 “ what would make for our good, whereas  
 “ he has set us an example, and prescribed  
 “ institutions and methods, whereby we  
 “ may learn to bear and forbear with con-  
 “ tent

“tent and satisfaction to ourselves. For he  
 “proclaims to us (*Matth. xi. 28.*) *Come unto*  
 “*me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will*  
 “*give you rest: for my yoke is easy, and*  
 “*my burden is light:* He has made it so,  
 “not by taking off the weight, but by  
 “inuring our shoulders to bear it without  
 “galling.” *All this is finely and justly ex-*  
*pressed; as is also this that follows.*

*On the blood, and sacrifice, and merits of*  
*Christ.*

Vol. viii. p. 213, &c. “The method  
 “of reconciliation, by sacrifice, prescribed  
 “to the Jews in their ceremonial law, and  
 “likewise practised by the heathens, seems  
 “to have introduced among both an opini-  
 “on, that after having angered God by  
 “their transgressions, they might bring  
 “him into good humour again, by the  
 “sweet-smelling favour exhaling from their  
 “sacrifices, or the magnificence or beauty  
 “of their oblations. But who, in these  
 “times of better knowledge, can imagine,  
 “that God is to be bribed out of his favours;  
 “that any thing can put him aside from his  
 “purpose,”

“ purpose, or render him propitious when  
 “ he was otherwise disposed.”

p. 214. “ The sacrifice of Christ could  
 “ have no efficacy to change the immutable  
 “ God, who is the same yesterday, to-day,  
 “ and for ever ; or to turn him from seve-  
 “ rity to graciousness and mercy : but was  
 “ efficacious for raising the human race to  
 “ that righteousness, which, in his original  
 “ constitution of universal nature, he had  
 “ made the sole avenue to eternal life.”

p. 215.—“ Much talk has passed among  
 “ the pious, concerning the precious blood  
 “ of Christ, whereby we were redeemed.  
 “ As if the material blood in his body was  
 “ of a richer composition than any other  
 “ blood, containing an occult quality, a  
 “ magic virtue, a vivifying spirit, efficaci-  
 “ ous to purge away all seeds of mortality  
 “ and corruption that could be found in  
 “ the world. And the Papists carry this  
 “ notion so far as to insist, that no one can  
 “ be saved without swallowing the body to-  
 “ gether with the blood included therein.”

p. 216. “ But I see no warrant to pro-  
 “ nounce the blood of Jesus a whit better  
 “ than that of any other man, who was born  
 “ with



“ with a good constitution, and had lived a  
 “ sober temperate life : therefore it was not  
 “ the blood shed, but the act of shedding  
 “ that availed to our benefit :—and the blood  
 “ was no otherwise precious, than as it  
 “ served to sustain that life which he sacri-  
 “ ficed for our sakes.”

“ Nor yet can we suppose any benefit or  
 “ delight accruing to the Father, from see-  
 “ ing him expire upon the cross. *So that*  
 “ *even his death was not expiatory, nor pro-*  
 “ *pitiatory in itself, nor any farther needed*  
 “ *than as it was necessary for establishing the*  
 “ *authority of the religion he had instituted,*  
 “ *for the restoring and perfecting human na-*  
 “ *ture throughout the whole species of crea-*  
 “ *tures partaking thereof.*”

p. 217. “ The appellation of *merit* can  
 “ no more be taken in the strict primary  
 “ sense than any of the former.—If any  
 “ one has done you some signal service, he  
 “ has a merit with you, you owe him a re-  
 “ turn. *But what merit had even Christ*  
 “ *himself with the Father ? What obligation*  
 “ *could his righteousness and sufferings lay*  
 “ *HIM under ? What accession was thereby*  
 “ *made to HIS power, HIS wisdom, or any*  
 “ *other*

“ other attribute? You will find nothing  
 “ tending that way in the sacred records,  
 “ which all along represent the restoration  
 “ of fallen man, as a *free grace of the Father,*  
 “ not a debt to the Son.”

*How important and necessary to be attended  
 to is this next remark!*

p. 343. “ I am apt vehemently to suspect,  
 “ that the prayers of our church frequently  
 “ concluding, *through, or for the sake of*  
 “ *Jesus Christ,* gives an idea to many per-  
 “ sons that God has no immediate regard  
 “ for us at all, but bestows his blessings  
 “ purely to gratify his Son, upon those to  
 “ whom he has happily taken a liking: and  
 “ that by the use of that name we may move  
 “ him to do a thing he was indifferent to  
 “ before. I need not take pains to shew  
 “ how repugnant this notion is to reason  
 “ and rational faith.———*For such as have*  
 “ *ears to hear,* they are told expressly, that  
 “ *God so loved the world,* that he gave his  
 “ Son to be a propitiation for our sins.—  
 “ And he is all along represented as *the*  
 “ *God of love;* sending his sunshine and his  
 “ rain upon the just and the unjust, long-  
 “ suffering and merciful, ready to forgive,  
 “ unwilling

“ unwilling the sinner should perish, but  
 “ that he should turn from his evil ways  
 “ and live. This being his character, there  
 “ is no doubt he is always ready to give his  
 “ creatures all the good things proper for  
 “ them, and consistent with the order of  
 “ government respecting his spiritual crea-  
 “ tures, established in perfect wisdom, of  
 “ his own mere motion, without needing  
 “ any intercession prompting him thereto.”

“ The gospel teaches that Christ is the  
 “ way and the life, for no man can come  
 “ to the Father unless through the Son:  
 “ He came from God to direct us by his  
 “ doctrines, and assist us by his institutions,  
 “ and goes before to lead us by his example,  
 “ in the road which is the natural avenue  
 “ to the divine blessings: therefore he is  
 “ styled the intercessor, Mediator, and agent  
 “ going between God and man, as I have  
 “ endeavoured already to explain. But then  
 “ we must travel the road ourselves, or shall  
 “ receive no benefit from his intercession,  
 “ which operates no otherwise than by bring-  
 “ ing us into the way: for even his death  
 “ and passion will, avail only such, who  
 “ strive to imitate his endurance in a good  
 “ cause;



“ cause; to crucify the lusts of their flesh,  
 “ the pride, indolence, and unruly passions  
 “ of their heart, and to subdue and subject  
 “ the carnal or sensual part to the spiritual  
 “ or rational.”

“ Therefore I apprehend we are not war-  
 “ ranted to expect that Christ will do any  
 “ thing for us at a distance in heaven, nor  
 “ otherwise than by the instrumentality of  
 “ our own powers towards bringing our  
 “ hearts into that frame, which may qualify  
 “ them for reception of these blessings,  
 “ which God in his wisdom and goodness  
 “ has prepared for his creatures. And by  
 “ the phrase, *through Jesus Christ*, is to be  
 “ understood, that we hope to obtain the  
 “ things we sue for, by the way he has  
 “ opened to us for arriving at them: And,  
 “ *for his sake*, implies that God will give  
 “ them to us, in consideration of our em-  
 “ ploying the means he has put in our hands  
 “ for attaining them.”

AFTER having shewn what an intelli-  
 gent christian, and *consistent Unitarian* this  
 excellent person was, in all respects, save in

his injudicious but well intended labours to give to the *Trinitarian* forms of worship in the established church an *Unitarian* meaning, which they will by no means admit; I shall close the whole with one farther citation from him, which shews that in other respects he was desirous of having the public devotions offered to the Almighty being as free from imperfection as they might be made.

“ In the place of public worship, I would  
 “ prohibit all pompous titles and courtly epi-  
 “ thets : these things are very proper in the  
 “ world to increase our reverence for those  
 “ whom God has set in authority over us,  
 “ but let every thing be done in its proper  
 “ place; let us render to Cesar the things  
 “ that are Cesar’s, and to God the things  
 “ that are God’s. When entered upon sa-  
 “ cred ground, we are to pay our court sole-  
 “ ly to heaven, not to our fellow-servants,  
 “ though placed in office above us. There  
 “ should be no *majesties*, nor *highnesses*, nor  
 “ *most noble patrons*, *reverends* nor *right*  
 “ *reverends*, nor by what *style* or *title* soever  
 “ *dignified* or *distinguished*.” Vol. viii. p.

To corroborate this observation of Mr. Tucker's, I shall subjoin the following brief extract from a late Publication; (*k*) to be mentioned in the next section.

“ WHETHER any high titles, even  
 “ those belonging to *his Majesty*  
 “ *himself*, be proper to be used  
 “ in a form of worship to God?”

## SECTION V.

*Of an Anonymous Tract, intituled, “ Queries  
 “ relating to the Book of Common Prayer,  
 “ &c.*

THERE are others however of the established church and those not a few, who are far from being satisfied with the latitude of interpretation taken by the Author of the Light of Nature pursued, and by which he would reconcile his Unitarian sentiments to the Trinitarian worship. In

(*k*) “ Queries relating to the Book of Common Prayer, &c.” p. 28.



the year 1774, were published (for Wilkie in St. Paul's Church Yard) anonymously, "Queries relating to the Book of Common Prayer, &c. with proposed amendments, addressed to Those in Authority, and submitted to their consideration;" believed to come from a *very respectable quarter*, and evidently bearing the signatures of a wise and good mind, sincerely interested for the honour of God and the purity of his worship. I hope such needful important Queries will not be suffered silently to die away, without obtaining their proper answer. I shall close this chapter with that part of them which immediately relates to my subject, and assure myself of the thanks of the Reader, if he chance not to have seen them before.

" WHETHER *all human explanations of what we confessedly do not understand, and all allusions to and deductions from such explanations, ought not to be removed intirely from a Form of Public Worship?*

" WHETHER

“ WHETHER *the Unity of the Godhead be not the grand point, that runs through the whole of the Scriptures, from the one end to the other?*

“ WHETHER *the revelations to the Patriarchs did not inculcate this? Whether the visible guidance of the God of Israel, and the inspiration renewed from time to time to Prophets under the old Covenant, were not designed professedly to keep or recall that people to the acknowledgement of the One true God: As the descent from heaven, or at least the visible appearance of Christ in the human nature, and the visible descent of the Holy Spirit, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, under the New Covenant, have been to recall all nations from polytheism and idolatry, to the worship of the One true God in spirit and in truth?*

- “ WHETHER *after this, after all these gracious manifestations of God to mankind, to instruct them in the unity and perfection and absolute sovereignty of his nature, it be right for the learned by their subtilties to mislead the unlearned, or to suffer them to be misled into a doubt whether there be not Three Gods?*
- “ WHETHER *all addresses to the Trinity, either separately or conjointly, however understood by the learned as Dii majores or Dii minorum gentium, must not lead the unlearned into the belief that there are Three Gods?*
- “ WHETHER *then; as no such addresses are ordered in Scripture; as prayer is ordered to be offered up to God the Father in the name of Christ; as there is no command for any prayers or addresses being offered*  
even



*even to Christ as our intercessor (for though it should seem that it might be allowable, yet we cannot affirm that it is); and as there is no warrant direct or indirect, implied or otherwise, to authorize any addresses whatsoever to the Holy Ghost; it might not be right, it might not be christian, it might not be most conformable with the known and express command of Christ himself, to “ have love one towards another;” to lay aside that practice, of which we ourselves scarcely know that it is right, for the sake of those who are persuaded (however mistaken they may be thought in that persuasion) that it is wrong?*

“ *WHETHER, on this same account, and for these same reasons, all declarations in our service, that have any tendency to confound the ideas of*

*the congregation, and to mislead them into the fancy that there can be Three Gods, be not of dangerous consequence, and ought not to be discarded accordingly?*

“ *WHETHER we can prove more than One to be Supreme? And whether all our Addresses should not in fact be, to “ God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost ;” as our church herself expresses it in her office for the ordination of Priests?*

“ *WHETHER therefore, the Amendments proposed some years ago by the late Dr. Clarke in his Prayer-book ; which are framed on this model (and to which all may now have access, the original being given lately by the public spirit of his worthy son to the British Museum) might*

*not*

*not be adopted, as the foundation of amendments at present ; since no man ever studied that subject more dispassionately, or was better read in the Scriptures, or was ever endowed with greater abilities for such a work, than he ?*

It appears from these *Queries*, that in the idea of the proposer of them, the worship of the Church of England, as it now stands in the Common Prayer Book, lies open to the charge of encouraging and misleading persons into the worship of *Three Gods*, instead of the one only true God, alone blessed for ever.



## CHAPTER VI.

*Of some circumstances favourable of late years  
to the progress of the doctrine of the Divine  
Unity.*

## SECTION I.

*Of the benefit accruing to the cause of Truth,  
from an open defence and maintenance of it.*

**W**E owe lasting obligations to those, who in times of great corruption of the truth, and in the midst of dangers and difficult trials have stood up for it. Others are thereby excited and encouraged, and the work of finishing what they so happily began, is made easier and safer for those that come after them.

“ At

(a) “ At the election of *Maximilian II.* by  
 “ the seven electors of the empire at Franck-  
 “ ford, some of them, we are told, being pro-  
 “ testants, went out of the place of worship,  
 “ when the Mass began, because they would  
 “ not be present at that idolatrous service;  
 “ but came in again when it was over.”

This was acting up to the light they had, and bearing their best testimony to God, and to what they believed to be his true worship. And it could not but have weight with many, so as to put them upon examining what the doctrines were, which gave such great offence to those princes; and what foundation there could be for such solemn renunciation of them.

I have always been much pleased with the character of *Gruter*, an eminent scholar and protestant, who lived about the time of the Reformation; and who may be considered as a sort of *Englishman*. For his mother was an English woman, and so distinguished for literature, that *Bayle*, whom I here make use of, thinks that she has great injury done her,

(a) Vide Hist. Maximil. II. in Rom. Reg. Elect. Hist. Simonii Schardi, Tom. 3. cited by Mr. Cheynell, in his Divine Trinunity, &c. p. 354.

her, in not being put in the honourable but small list of learned women. And his father, having been driven by the persecution for religion under Duke D'Alva, from the Low Countries, settled for a few years at *Norwich*, by which means his son had part of his education at *Cambridge*.

In a very early part of his life, he lost the chair of History-professor in the university of *Wirtemburgh*, by refusing to subscribe their *Lutheran* confession of faith.

“ Being at one time told, that he must  
 “ change his religion, or leave the country  
 “ where he was. This last I shall chuse,  
 “ says he, if constrained to such an alter-  
 “ native. And if I am not permitted to  
 “ pass my days in cities, I will spend them  
 “ in the fields and woods. The Almighty  
 “ Being will there provide some herbs and  
 “ roots to support me, during the short  
 “ space I have to live.” (B)

At

(B) “ Cum juberetur ad aliam religionem transire,  
 “ aut exire foras. Hoc malo, inquit, quam illud. Si  
 “ non licebit vivere in urbe, licebit in agris aut in silvis.  
 “ Aliquid semper Deus suppeditabit radicis aut herbæ,  
 “ quod spiritum hunc alat, non diu mansurum.”

“ *Venator. in Paneg. Gruten, apud Bayle.*”



At *Padua*, a Professor's place was offered him, with liberty of conscience so far, that he might worship God in what manner he pleased, *in private*. But he would not submit to such conditions of silence and restraint in this respect; (*b*) declaring that all the riches of the world should not bribe him to it.

This was a just and noble resolution; not to be allured by any advantages to settle in a country, where he could not enjoy the free and public exercise of his religion. For to have consented to such a demand would have been the giving up his right and privilege as a man to the caprice and tyranny of others; and would have looked like being bought with money to conceal what he was persuaded to be the truth, concerning the great object of religious worship.

So that eminent hebrew, *Daniel*, (*c*) disregarding the insidious decree of the Chaldean

(*b*) "Cultus enim divini libertatem publicam (quamvis privatim recepturus) præ quibuscunque divitiis sibi negabat esse venalem." *Id. Ibid.*

(*c*) Now when *Daniel* knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber towards *Jerusalem*, he kneeled upon his knees three times

dean princes, did not refrain from his customary worship of Jehovah, the living and true God, though they had made it a capital crime; considering, that to have submitted to their decree would deserve to be looked upon as a mean pusillanimous denial of him.

In reading the annals of our English history, from the very beginning of the reign of *Elizabeth* to our own days, we are presented continually as we pass along, with the edifying spectacle of a number of conscientious christians, growing by degrees into a large body; dissatisfied with the mode of religion

*times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. Daniel vi. 10, 11.* There was no ostentation here, as some have been *willing* to suppose. Praying with his windows open towards Jerusalem, in their captivity, might seem to be countenanced by *1 Kings viii.* We may not doubt but some retired part of the house would be chosen, the least exposed to noise and interruption. But what a person of his very high rank and station was wont to do thrice each day, could not be concealed from his domestics: some of whom might be prevailed with to admit his enemies to overhear and observe what he did in his privacy.

religion prescribed by the State, and refusing to conform to it, notwithstanding the severe persecution and sufferings to which they were exposed; boldly asserting the right of judging for themselves in such matters, and of worshipping God according to the dictates of conscience, in opposition to arbitrary and unjust laws.

Some may hold it a sign of weakness, for men to subject themselves, as these did, to fines, to imprisonment, to be driven into deserts and foreign climes, rather than *wear a white surplice, use the sign of the cross in baptism, or kneel at the Lord's supper*; and may think they would have had more claim to compassion, and a juster ground for their separation, if they had entertained the scruples, which now make so many uneasy under the Establishment, on account of its worship not being directed, as they think, to its true and only object, the one God and Father of all, but to two other persons, whom they esteem not to be Gods, nor to be worshiped.

But, however it may appear to others, nothing is a trifle to a man's self, that relates to conscience. And besides, although these persons were not always consistent,  
(consistency,



(consistency, alas ! seldom belongs to mortals) but required others to subscribe and conform to their own catechisms, articles, and confessions of faith : yet the general principle on which they professed to act, was rightly founded and excellent ; *viz.* that God, or Christ as appointed by him, is the only king and lawgiver in his church, and no other authority whatsoever in the things of religion to be submitted to or acknowledged.

For this laudable singularity, in chusing to obey God rather than man ; for worshipping the Almighty Being in a way different from others, they were made the theme of scorn and ridicule and obloquy through the nation. For although they stood up for what is above all other things most valuable to men, the freedom of the mind and conscience from all human restraints and impositions : so ignorant nevertheless and untaught were the generality of people of all ranks, at that time and long afterwards, nay even within our own memories ; that *a Dissenter, in the eyes of many churchmen, was a creature supposed to be hardly human, not fit to be spoken to, or to have any commerce with ;*  
at

at the same time that few would give themselves the trouble to inquire what their opinions were, and the grounds they had, just or otherwise, for them.

This contemptuous treatment, however, with which these men were so little moved, that it only excited pity for the vain presumption and ignorance of their adversaries, has been seen to operate very differently on their descendants, in causing too many of them to swerve from that steadfast upright principle and conduct, of which they had such an admirable pattern before them. “ If  
 “ when you reside for any time in the coun-  
 “ try (says a celebrated author (a) you chuse  
 “ to go to church rather than to the dissent-  
 “ ing meeting house, because the dissenters  
 “ happen to make no great figure in the  
 “ place: if you feel any thing like *shame*,  
 “ upon seeing the external meanness of the  
 “ interest, and secretly wish to have your  
 “ connections with it concealed; conclude  
 “ that the spirit of this world has got too  
 “ much hold of you, and that religious

(a) *A Letter to the Dissenters as such*, by the Rev. Dr. Priestley, p. 28.

“ motives have lost their influence. If this  
 “ be your general practice (and I wish I  
 “ could say it was not with so many of the  
 “ more opulent among us) you are but half  
 “ a dissenter, and a few more worldly con-  
 “ siderations would throw you intirely into  
 “ the church of England, or into any  
 “ church upon earth. With this temper  
 “ of mind you would, in primitive times,  
 “ have been ashamed of *christianity* itself,  
 “ and have joined the more fashionable and  
 “ pompous heathen worship.”

Perhaps the noblest and most extraordinary  
 sacrifice that ever was made to integrity and  
 religious principle, was that which was  
 exhibited by this class of men, whether we  
 consider the extent of the numbers engaged  
 in it, the purity of their moral characters,  
 or the eminent talents possessed by many of  
 them, with the necessary valuable qualificati-  
 ons of all of them in general, for their high and  
 honourable office; when, after the Refor-  
 mation, and particularly in consequence of  
 the *Bartholomew Act* of Uniformity, little  
 short of two thousand gospel ministers gave  
 up their benefices, which to many of them  
 was all their worldly subsistence, rather than  
 declare



declare their *unfeigned assent* and *consent* to the Liturgy and Articles of the Church, and conform to many things which they disapproved and condemned.

The solemn deliberations and reasonings of some of these Nonconformists with themselves on these trying occasions, which have been preserved to us in Dr. Calamy's "Account of the Ministers ejected after the Restoration of Charles II." breathe an uncommon spirit of piety, and shew an admirable wisdom, and true christian courage at the same time. Had more of these been remaining, they would have been a high gratification to those who love to see the workings of the human mind on such solemn occasions. We are however very highly obliged to the learned and respectable Compiler, for his vast labours in procuring and furnishing us with memorials of so many excellent persons. Among them nevertheless, it must be confessed, we do not meet with one, who entertained any scruples concerning the *Trinitarian* worship in the Liturgy of the established church. Nay, such was their rigour on these points, that an Unitarian, an Arian, or Socinian,

would hardly have been allowed the name of christian by the greater part of them, and have found little favour at their hands. But, for this ignorance and narrowness of mind, which was not peculiar to *them* at that time, their just praise is not to be denied them, in other respects. They are not the less to be honoured for so bravely adhering to what they believed to be truth and the Divine will, not only without selfish views, but against all their worldly interests.

IN the year 1719, some of the worthy descendants of these *Bartholomew* Confessors, consisting chiefly of the ministers in *London* and its neighbourhood, in one of their assemblies at *Salter's Hall*, made an open declaration against all unscriptural impositions. And although the vote did not pass without powerful opposition, (*f*) it stands upon record, “ as the first example of a body of  
“ christians’

(*f*) “ I have seen a list of seventy-three of those Ministers who signed their Advices to the People of *Exeter*  
“ (for

“ christians’ public declaration for christian  
 “ liberty in matters of religion.” (g)

It is a remark which I have frequently heard from some distinguished characters for learning and judgment among the Dissenters, that if the *more enlightened* sort of these ministers, (if it may be allowed so to term those of them) who were known Unitarians, the *Hunts*, the *Smyths*, the *Lowmans*, the *Lardners*, &c. &c. had gone forwards after this, with christian prudence, yet openly and boldly holding out to view, to their respective congregations, the grand cause of *their particular disapprobation* of the worship of the church of England, which had given no disturbance to their dissenting forefathers; namely, that they could not join in prayers where the Person of the Almighty Father of all was not con-

G g 3

sidered

“ (for whose sake the Assembly was called) without in-  
 “ sisting on any unscriptural Declarations: as also the  
 “ other of sixty-nine, who signed to the contrary. So  
 “ that, to use the words of the late excellent Master of  
 “ the Rolls, Sir *Joseph Jekyll*, on this occasion; *the Bible*  
 “ *carried it by four.*”

Memoirs of the life of W. Whiston, p. 226.

(g) Id. Ibid. p. 221.



sidered as God alone, but two other Persons joined with him as equal to him, and worshiped : And had they occasionally, in their private instructions from the Scripture, explained and recommended this, with all earnestness, in the light in which it appeared to them, to young persons, as the foundation of all true religion ; and shewn how inconsistent and contrary it was to every right principle, for *Unitarians* customarily to join in *Trinitarian* worship : Such a conduct uniformly pursued, it was observed, would most probably have prevented the falling off and diminution of the congregations of the *rational* Dissenters, (as the less orthodox have been wont to be called) which has been so remarkable of late years. For we have seen, and we frequently see the upper and more opulent part of their hearers, sliding back again with their families into the established church, as if ashamed of what their ancestors had done in leaving it, and seeking to hide the memory of it ; whilst the lower and more serious sort withdraw and associate with the Independents and Calvinists, overawed with those anathemas with which their sermons are most commonly filled,

filled, against all persons that do not hold Christ to be the most high God; and not sufficiently instructed to see the weakness and presumption of making the favour of God depend upon opinions of any kind concerning God or Christ, or indeed upon any thing but our sincerity in searching out and doing the will of God, when discovered by us.

Had these persons, who so lightly desert the christian society to which they belong, been well informed of the truth and importance of the doctrine of the Divine Unity, they would have been alarmed at the very thought of uniting themselves with the worshipers of any other person as God, but the almighty Father and Creator of all things; and would have been no less afraid of putting their children upon doing what in themselves they should have held to have been idolatrous. But from their earliest years, they would have accustomed them to pray to the heavenly Father alone, informing them that they were not to offer up their devotions to Christ or to any other person, because there was no other person who was God, or who could hear their

prayers : and as they grew up, and became capable of comprehending the reasons for it, they would have shewn them how the whole matter lay in the Scriptures.

For if there be any thing which is the duty of parents, it is surely such to teach a child, in the best manner they are able, (t) who

(t) We have a sample of the method of initiating a young child into the knowledge of God, delineated by a fine pen, so easy, so natural, and sensible, that I know nothing beyond it in our own or any language. It is also strictly *unitarian* throughout: the author having very judiciously mixed nothing of controversy or human systems in a work which was wholly for practice. In the latter part of his life, he fell into the depths of mysticism, which gave a tincture to his subsequent writings, and made them less intelligible and useful. However, the works of Jacob Behmen, the Teutonic philosopher, whom he followed, did not hurt the dispositions of his own mind, his piety and benevolence, if they did not rather improve them in one respect, as he seems thence to have derived and adopted the opinion of the final universal happiness of all the rational creation of God. His small piece which I have mentioned is thus introduced :

“ *Paternus* lived about two hundred years ago ; he had  
 “ but one son, whom he educated himself in his own  
 “ house. As they were sitting together in the garden,  
 “ when the child was ten years old, *Paternus* thus began  
 “ to him :

“ The



who is the God that made him, and to whom it is that he is to offer his prayers and acknowledgements for every thing he enjoys and stands in need of; whether to more persons

“ The little time you have been in the world, my  
 “ child, you have spent wholly with me; and my love  
 “ and tenderness to you, has made you look upon me as  
 “ your only friend and benefactor, and the cause of all  
 “ the comfort and pleasure that you enjoy: your heart,  
 “ I know, would be ready to break with grief, if you  
 “ thought this was the last day that I should live with  
 “ you.

“ But my child, though you think yourself mighty  
 “ happy, because you have hold of my hand, you are now  
 “ in the hands, and under the tender care of a much  
 “ greater Father and Friend than I am; whose love to  
 “ you is far greater than mine, and from whom you receive such blessings as no mortal can give.

“ That God whom you have seen me daily worship;  
 “ whom I daily call upon to bless both you and me, and  
 “ all mankind; whose wondrous acts are recorded in  
 “ those Scriptures which you constantly read: That God  
 “ who created the heavens and the earth; who brought a  
 “ flood upon the old world; who saved Noah in the ark;  
 “ who was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;  
 “ whom Job blessed and praised in the greatest afflictions;  
 “ who delivered the Israelites out of the hands of the  
 “ Egyptians; who was the protector of righteous Joseph,  
 “ Moses, Joshua, and holy Daniel; who sent so many  
 “ prophets into the world; who sent his Son to redeem  
 “ mankind:

persons than One, or to One person only :  
to give all the light and assistance they possibly can, on a point which the sacred writings make of such vast consequence, and to guard  
and

“ mankind: This God, who has done all these great  
“ things, who has created so many millions of men that  
“ lived and died before you was born, with whom the  
“ spirits of good men that are departed this life, now live;  
“ whom infinite numbers of angels now worship in heaven;  
“ this great God, who is the Creator of worlds,  
“ of angels, and men, is your living Father and Friend,  
“ your good Creator and Nourisher, from whom, and  
“ not from me, you received your being ten years ago,  
“ at the same time that I planted that little tender elm  
“ that you there see.

“ I myself am not half the age of this shady oak, under  
“ which we sit; many of our fathers have sat under it’s  
“ boughs, we have all of us called it our’s in our turn,  
“ though it stands, and drops it’s masters, as it drops  
“ it’s leaves.

“ You see, my son, this wide and large firmament,  
“ over our heads, where the sun, and moon, and all the  
“ stars, appear in their turns. If you was to be carried  
“ up to any of these bodies, at this vast distance from us,  
“ you would still discover others as much above you, as  
“ the stars that you see here are above the earth. Were  
“ you to go up or down, east or west, north or south,  
“ you would find the same height without any top, and  
“ the same depth without any bottom.

“ And yet, my child, so great is God, that all these  
“ bodies added together, are but as a grain of sand in his  
“ sight.

and secure their families as much as may be, by precept and example, against the errors and false worship of those among whom they live.

The

“ fight. And yet you are as much the care of this great  
 “ God and Father of all worlds, and all spirits, as if he  
 “ had no son but you, or there were no creature for him  
 “ to love and protect but you alone. He numbers the  
 “ hairs of your head, watches over you sleeping and wak-  
 “ ing, and has preserved you from a thousand dangers,  
 “ which neither you nor I know any thing of.

“ How poor my power is, and how little I am able to  
 “ do for you, you have often seen. Your late sickness  
 “ has shewn you how little I could do for you in that  
 “ state; and the frequent pains in your head are plain  
 “ proofs, that I have no power to remove them. I can  
 “ bring you food and medicines, but am not able to turn  
 “ them into your relief and nourishment: it is God alone  
 “ that can do this for you.

“ Therefore, my child, fear and worship, and love  
 “ God. Your eyes indeed cannot see him, but every  
 “ thing you see are so many marks of his power and pre-  
 “ sence, and he is nearer to you than any thing that you  
 “ can see.

“ Take him for your Lord, and Father, and Friend;  
 “ look up unto him as the fountain and cause of all the  
 “ good you have received through my hands; and reve-  
 “ rence me only as the bearer and minister of God’s good  
 “ things unto you. And he that blessed my father before  
 “ I was born, will bless you when I am dead.

“ Your



The fear of causing children to be regarded as precise, singular, and unfashionable, and of taking them out of the society of persons of a certain rank, (generally in this respect the most ignorant and ill-taught of all others) who are apt to look upon Dissenters in a low light; and of depriving them of those emoluments and preferments, which are not to be enjoyed without a conformity to the State-religion, can never have any effect upon *Unitarian* parents who are truly pious, to prevent their inculcating upon their offspring, that they were on no account, as it would be sinful in them who know better, to frequent the religious assemblies of christians, where any other person was worshipped

“ Your youth and little mind is only yet acquainted  
 “ with my family, and therefore you think there is no  
 “ happiness out of it. But, my child, you belong to a  
 “ greater family than mine; you are a younger member  
 “ of the family of the almighty Father of all nations, who  
 “ has created infinite orders of angels, and numberless  
 “ generations of men, to be fellow-members of one and  
 “ the same society in heaven, &c. &c.

“ A serious Call to a devout and holy Life, by *William Law*, M. A. p. 239, &c.

A child thus instructed would never entertain an idea of praying to any Person, but the Universal Parent and sovereign Disposer of all things.

ed or invoked as God, but the Father. For what are all the things of this world that you can bequeath to those that come after you, compared to the knowlege of the true God? Rational and just sentiments here might be likely to inspire youth with an inward principle of regard to God, might be instrumental in saving them from vice, and the temptations of the world, and guard them against the contagion of profane irreligious company, the mixing with which cannot always be avoided; and thus secure them from actually renouncing christianity itself: advantages of infinitely more value to them than the riches of ten thousand worlds.

And so desirable and welcome is the discovery of truth to the mind, in the morning of life, especially of what relates to the Great Author of being and our duty to HIM; that the first disclosure of the knowlege of the strict unity of the First Cause, and benevolent Parent of all things, would be received with transports of joy, and could not fail of making lasting and indelible impressions; especially when your child was led at the same time to behold the darkness and polytheism in which the whole christian world has lain involved

involved for so many long ages, and is still involved, and made sensible of the divine goodness to him in opening his eyes, and delivering him out of a state of such gloomy confusion in respect of the great object of divine worship and prayer.

For to their opening unprejudiced understandings, so just, so well-founded, so natural and plain might the sole worship and adoration of the Father of all things be made to appear, that they would wonder how men who had the Bible before them for their direction could turn aside to the worship of any other. For they would easily be made to behold at one glance, that from the beginning of the world to the coming of Christ, there was no other person, an object of divine worship, but Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth, the God of Israel, that was ever thought of by or at all known to the patriarchs or prophets, or worshiped by the Israelites, unless when they sunk into idolatry, and adopted the false gods of the neighbouring nations. And assuredly our Saviour Christ never made mention of any other God, but Jehovah, the supreme Father, and sovereign Lord of all things; nor ever proposed any other person,



person, as an object of worship; or directed his own worship and prayers to any other.

It does not seem possible, that the one true God and Father of all, can ever be generally known and acknowledged, if parents and others in situations of authority and influence like them, who are favoured with light and knowlege, and who believe HIM to be the sole object of worship, not only neglect to impart their knowlege to those about them, but also carry them along with themselves to the public devotions of those christians, who worship other persons, besides HIM.

Those however are much to be pitied, and great allowance should be made for them, who having been born, and living under great civil establishments of religion, and growing to see the wrongness of them in many respects, especially in the worship carried on in them not being uniformly and constantly directed to its true object, are unhappy in their situations, but so intangled by their worldly circumstances and connections as not to be able to withdraw themselves from it without bringing others with them into difficulties and distresses: though  
a firm

a firm trust in God, in well doing, would remove every obstacle out of their way.

But, that Unitarians, Dissenters, already out of the church established; that they who have the blessing of being free from all such servitude, and subjection to human authority in the things of God, should voluntarily put themselves under the yoke again, now so much harder than that (b) under which

(b) Says an able advocate for a just dissent from the established church, in our day; “ To us the church of  
 “ *England* appears to furnish numerous examples of a  
 “ gross and culpable deviation from the simplicity of the  
 “ gospel institution and worship. Various innovations  
 “ are blended with its profession of christianity; as if the  
 “ divine author of our faith had not a clear and compre-  
 “ hensive view of all that was necessary to the improve-  
 “ ment of his disciples in piety, or for giving his religion  
 “ an efficacious promulgation. We are ready to ask,  
 “ Is *confirmation* an institution of Christ? Is *the absolution*  
 “ *of the sick* an institution of Christ? Are *the crosses in bap-*  
 “ *tism—bowing at the name of Jesus—worshipping towards*  
 “ *the east—the consecration of churches—appointments of*  
 “ *Christ?* Is the requisition of *kneeling* at the Lord’s sup-  
 “ per, or *the posture itself*, an ordinance of Christ? Are  
 “ the *festivals and holidays*, observed by the church, ap-  
 “ pointments of Christ? We know, and we rejoice in  
 “ the utility of those provisions for the spread of truth and  
 “ piety, that HE gave some apostles, some *pastors and*  
 “ *teachers*;

*which their forefathers groaned, but which however their honest minds were not able to bear ; is not, to say the least, a thing easily to be accounted for, or to reconcile with any just and right way of thinking.* By going over to a church, which they as Unitarians, are persuaded, is very corrupt in the grand point of the object of worship, they take the ready way to obstruct and prevent all reformation. For wherefore complain, or desire any thing amiss to be rectified, when it is no more than you can conform to without scruple or uneasiness ?

What language would Mr. Whiston have used concerning such Dissenters, who did not refrain from saying, with his wonted bluntness and honesty ; “ It is certainly much  
 “ more necessary for private persons in the  
 H h “ established

“ *teachers ; but where do we read that He gave arch-*  
 “ *deacons, deacons, prebends, canons, precentors, &c.* Above  
 “ all, is the worship of *One God in Trinity, and Trinity*  
 “ *in Unity*, an appointment of Christ ? Is there any pre-  
 “ cept in the New Testament that enjoins it ? or any ex-  
 “ ample of its being practised by the apostles, to give it  
 “ authority.”

“ Letters to the Rev. *John Sturges*, M. A. in answer to his Considerations on the present State of the Church Establishment, by *Joshua Toulmin*, M. A. London, printed for J. Johnson, 1782.



“ established church to separate from it, on  
 “ account of these points of great moment,  
 “ (viz. its Athanasian doctrine and worship,  
 “ &c.) than it was for very many of those  
 “ dissenters of old to separate from the  
 “ church of England, about (*precomposed*)  
 “ forms of prayer, or surplices, or the cross  
 “ in baptism?”

## SECTION II.

*Of some recent public declarations in favour  
 of the Unitarian doctrine and worship, by  
 an open and avowed separation from the  
 worship of the church of England.*

**I** CANNOT better introduce and recom-  
 mend this article to the reader, than by  
 laying before him Mr. *Whiston's* methods of  
 quieting his mind, whilst he frequented the  
 worship of the church of England, and the  
 resolution which he came to at last about it.  
 And I shall let him speak for himself.

This good man represents his being much  
 affected with a letter he had received from

an

an unknown hand, during the time he was at Tunbridge Wells, in the year 1746. Therein the writer is very earnest with him to know and be directed what course he should take, upon the following description of the state of his mind, having previously given a long process and detail of what had led him to it.

(i) “ In short, says this his unknown correspondent, I became fully convinced of this grand fundamental truth, that *the Father alone, exclusive of all other beings and persons whatsoever, was the most high God; or in other words, the only God of the christian religion: a doctrine evidently taught by our blessed Saviour and his apostles.*”

“ Thus far all was right, till reading the authors who wrote on the other side of the question, I was somewhat perplexed; not on account of those opinions I had embraced, but in regard of the legality of continuing a member of the Church, from which I found the pretended orthodox were for excluding the poor *Arians*. Among many others, I shall just mention

H h 2

“ one

(i) Memoirs of his own life, p. 499, &c.

“ one or two, which seem applicable to the  
 “ present purpose.”

“ The author of a pamphlet called, “ *Se-*  
 “ *veral hundred texts to prove our Saviour*  
 “ *to be the most high God*: a character I am  
 “ sure he never laid the least claim to, but  
 “ always attributed it to his Father: this  
 “ author has these words: “ *If any deny the*  
 “ *eternal deity of our Saviour, they exclude*  
 “ *themselves from all christian assemblies. It*  
 “ *must be gross hypocrisy and prevarication in*  
 “ *such to be present so much as occasionally,*  
 “ *at the reading of the Liturgy of the church*  
 “ *of England; when all the offices either sup-*  
 “ *pose the divinity of our Saviour, or plainly*  
 “ *declare it.*”

“ Another writer, in an Address to the  
 “ conforming *Arians*, both among the cler-  
 “ gy and laity, accuses them of the vilest hy-  
 “ pocrisy, in being present at the hearing of  
 “ prayers, and creeds which they profess not  
 “ to believe; and absolutely insists on it as  
 “ their indispensable duty to separate from  
 “ the church. And affirms that a protestant  
 “ might as well conform with a papist, or a  
 “ christian with a mahometan, as an unitarian  
 “ with the orthodox. And by no means  
 “ admits



“ admits their salvo ; viz. their not repeating  
 “ those passages or prayers in the Liturgy,  
 “ which in their opinion are blasphemous,  
 “ and derogatory to the supreme unequalled  
 “ majesty of God, the Father.”

Mr. Whiston having mentioned the receipt and contents of this letter, with which he was much disturbed, judged it proper, in his own defence, to give a recapitulation of what he had some years before advanced and published, when he was accused of joining in *idolatrous* worship, and of *bowing in the bouse of Rimmon*, (*k*) on account of his continuing to frequent the service of the church of England, many parts of which he condemned.

“ How unjustifiable soever (says he) I have  
 “ long thought some instances of worship in  
 “ the *Athanasian* churches, and particularly  
 “ in the church of *England*, with which I  
 “ usually join in public worship, and in the  
 “ Eucharist ; I mean, during the great distresses I am at present in, between joining in  
 “ a church not yet free from the *Athanasian*  
 “ heresy in public worship, or of omitting  
 “ almost all public worship at all ; yet did I

H h 3

“ never

(*k*) Id. Ibid. p. 391, &c.

“ never think *that* undue worship of the Son,  
 “ and Holy Spirit, as equal to God the Fa-  
 “ ther, which the modern *Athanasians* have  
 “ ventured upon, without, I verily think,  
 “ nay against the intire Old and New Testa-  
 “ ment, and without, nay against all the  
 “ other antient records of christianity, to be,  
 “ strictly speaking, in the language of Scrip-  
 “ ture, the crime of *Idolatry*.”—(N. B. *It*  
*is nevertheless in direct violation of the first*  
*commandment given by almighty God, (Exodus*  
*xx.) Thou shalt have no other Gods before*  
*ME. It was reserved for the Athanasian chris-*  
*tians alone, to suppose and constitute two other*  
*Divine Persons, equal to the supreme Father,*  
*and as such to invoke and worship them,*

“ So that, continues he, had I joined  
 “ with the church in this *Athanasian* wor-  
 “ ship, how criminal soever I had been on  
 “ other accounts in so doing; yet had I not,  
 “ in my own judgment, been guilty of that  
 “ most heinous crime of *Scripture-Idolatry*.  
 “ But that I ever *join* in that *Athanasian*  
 “ worship, though present at it, in any de-  
 “ gree; or so much as *appear* to join in it,  
 “ when I join in other parts of the public  
 “ worship, is notoriously false. Every body  
 “ that

“ that takes notice of my constant behaviour  
 “ in the public service, may easily perceive,  
 “ that I never join in any of those parts of  
 “ the Nicene creed, of the Litany, or of the  
 “ Doxologies; or of any prayers, or worship  
 “ whatever that are of that kind; and that,  
 “ whenever I am present when the *Athanasian*  
 “ creed, that shame and reproach of the pub-  
 “ lic worship of the church of England, is  
 “ there repeated, I do always sit down, to  
 “ shew the whole congregation my disagree-  
 “ ing thereto.”——“ And I farther declare,  
 “ that I shall not think it lawful for me any  
 “ longer to frequent that public worship, than  
 “ whilst I am not only permitted to join in  
 “ the rest of it without joining in the *Atha-*  
 “ *nasian* parts; but permitted to make this  
 “ open declaration, that I do not, and dare not  
 “ join in those parts for any consideration.”

But this most conscientious worthy man  
 was by no means satisfied with these endea-  
 vours to palliate and excuse his conformity  
 in any shape, to what he believed to be ex-  
 tremely wrong, and contrary to the express  
 command of God. Therefore after weigh-  
 ing the difficulties he should be under in  
 wholly deserting the public service of the



church of England, and uniting himself with any congregation of Dissenters at that time, he thus concludes in reference to the anonymous letter sent to him, and declares his full mind upon the matter.

“ In short, to determine the question (*l*)  
 “ proposed to me; I see no very right way  
 “ of avoiding all the beforementioned diffi-  
 “ culties, in point of conscience, but by set-  
 “ ting up new and truly christian congrega-  
 “ tions. Which as I have formerly done at  
 “ my own house, at some times, several years  
 “ ago: so have I frequently expressed my ear-  
 “ nest desire of making 120 members of such  
 “ a congregation, for the revival of that pri-  
 “ mitive christianity, which began (*m*) with  
 “ such

(*l*) The question proposed to him was thus put. “ As  
 “ hypocrisy is undoubtedly a sin odious to God and man,  
 “ I with many others, should take it as a singular favour,  
 “ if, in some of your important writings, you would  
 “ discuss this important question; viz. with what church  
 “ or sect the *Arians*, in this present corrupted state of  
 “ things, ought to communicate, till it pleases God more  
 “ compleatly to reform the christian world? Whether  
 “ with that established? or whether they ought to separate,  
 “ and go over to the Dissenters, as many Arian Ministers  
 “ are supposed to be amongst them?”

Memoirs of his own life. p. 501, 502.

(*m*) Acts i. 15.

“ such a number. Wherein I would myself,  
 “ while life and health would permit, con-  
 “ stantly officiate, according to that *Liturgy*  
 “ *of the church of England, reduced nearer to*  
 “ *the primitive standard*, which I published  
 “ thirty-five years ago, and have ever since  
 “ made use of upon all such occasions.

“ *And may God almighty bless mine and*  
 “ *all other good christians endeavours for the*  
 “ *setting up of such truly primitive congre-*  
 “ *gations ; and may such congregations, when*  
 “ *they are once set up, increase more and more*  
 “ *unto a perfect day, and partake of the largest*  
 “ *portions of divine grace here, and of the*  
 “ *highest degrees of heavenly glory hereafter.*  
 “ *Amen and Amen.”*

### S E C T I O N III.

*Of the first rise of the church of Unitarian  
 christians assembling at the Chapel in Essex-  
 Street.*

THERE is a satisfaction in the thought  
 of having been comprehended in the  
 foregoing devout prayer of this holy man, as  
 belong-

belonging to a congregation of christians, such as he wished to see established, in which the heavenly Father is acknowledged and worshiped, as the only God of christians. But there will be a much greater cause to rejoice, if such a congregation (who are thus truly primitive and apostolic in their worship, according to Mr. *Whiston's* idea, and as they humbly presume themselves,) do also resemble in the piety and purity of their lives, that first christian society in Jerusalem, over which the apostles presided.

From what convictions of mind, and by what steps, the first Preacher at this chapel, and composer of this work, was led to quit an eligible station in the church of England, has been told at large elsewhere.

But he is happy in this opportunity of expressing his grateful thanks to those friends, by whose encouragement and assistance, his own wishes and plan for a more scriptural worship have been realized.

A temporary place of worship was first provided, and opened, April 17, 1774.

Previous to this, private letters had been received from several persons then unknown, and applications made by others, signifying  
 3 their



their desire of becoming members of a society formed upon unitarian principles.

By these natural, gradual steps, a small society was formed; which being increased by the accession of others of the same sentiment, a more convenient place to meet in became necessary. And in the latter end of the year 1777, a purchase being made of the premises called *Essex-House*, the present chapel was erected; which was opened for public worship on Sunday, March 28, 1778.

The design of its first founders and benefactors, was, as the disciples of Jesus Christ, and in conformity to his example and directions, to celebrate and perpetuate the worship of the one only God of the universe. Which laudable intent, 'tis hoped, will continue to operate gently and unceasingly, till the principle become general, and the worship universal.

It is a subject of joy, and of increasing gratitude to the Giver of all good, who ordereth all things; that the secession of the writer from the established church did not terminate in a different and less useful employment, than that of a christian minister, which was always his favourite wish and greatest happiness: and he can desire no  
higher

higher honour, if, by the divine blessing, his labours should contribute to the advancement of the true knowlege and worship of God, and the final good and happiness of any one of his fellow-creatures.

Not that there have been wanting those who led the way before him, in quitting their preferments in the church, unable to continue any longer in carrying on or joining in a worship contrary to the convictions of their own minds, where prayer was offered up to persons whom they believed not to be Gods, or capable of hearing them: while others started nearly at the same time, or came away soon after him; and not a few are still following, and separating themselves from the communion of a church, in which they cannot remain with a quiet mind.

Of some of these, whose particular history has come to my knowlege, or which I have been able to collect from what they themselves have told the Public, I would say something in this place; that the benefit of their example may not be lost. And this motive, it is hoped, will excuse the liberty taken of producing their names, without asking leave.

## SECTION IV.

Of Dr. *Robertson*.

AND first should be named, the aged and venerable *father of unitarian nonconformity* of our own days, and of a conscientious renunciation of the worship of the established church, Dr. *William Robertson* ; a person of fine talents, vivid imagination, and sound judgment, even to his 79th year ; still engaged in the laborious province of a teacher of a Free School at Wolverhampton, which, after giving up his preferment, he willingly undertook for his support, though now too much enfeebled to execute it intirely himself as he was wont ; and never so well provided for as not to call for the kind generosity of friends : for till within these few years, he had no small portion of his annual income to pay to a superannuated predecessor.

Of him something has been said in another \* place, which I need not here repeat ; where reference was made to his own ingenious

\* “ Apology on resigning Catterick.” *The end.*



nious work, and modest account of himself.

To this however must be added, that he *now* stands alone, unprop'd, the father of a numerous offspring, who are all gone before him; yet still retaining and keeping up that serenity and chearful trust in the Divine Providence, which can only belong to the virtuous and innocent mind, that has always before it those prospects which the gospel opens into an happy futurity, where the holy and the good will meet again, never to part more.

## SECTION V.

Of Dr. *John Jebb*.

**I**N *September* 1775, Mr. now Dr. *John Jebb*, was able to put in execution his purpose, which he had fixed some time before, and made known to some of his friends, of resigning his office, and preferments, in the established church. The latter were not great in themselves; but from his acknowledged

knowledge superior abilities, and connections, his pretensions to the highest stations in it were well-grounded, and the road must have been open and easy to him, could he have accommodated himself in any degree to take the necessary steps towards it.

What, a mind, feeling and upright like his, must have endured, whilst officiating in the forms of the church, and invoking in prayer any other Being, but the one true God, and Father of all, he himself has described, in the conclusion of the account that he gives of the immediate motives of his resignation: though it does but feebly represent the anxieties and distress which he laboured under, and which I have sometimes heard from himself.

*That account* however is too important to be omitted here; and those who have read it before will be glad to review it again.

“ It has been (says (t) he) for some time  
“ past my firm persuasion, that the doctrine

(t) “ A Short State of the Reasons for a late Resignation. To which are added occasional Observations, and a Letter to the Right Reverend the Bishop of Norwich. By *John Jebb*, M. A. Cambridge, 1775.”  
p. 4, 5, 6.

“ of

“ of the TRINITY, as explained in the  
 “ Creed of Athanasius,—as propounded in  
 “ the thirty nine Articles of the Church of  
 “ England,—as established in the Liturgy,  
 “ and further guarded by penal sanctions in  
 “ an Act of Parliament passed in the reign  
 “ of William the third, is equally contrary  
 “ to sound Reason and the holy Scriptures.  
 “ I am fully satisfied that in the Divine Na-  
 “ ture there is no PLURALITY of Persons;  
 “ but that the Almighty Author of the  
 “ universe is in the strictest sense of the ex-  
 “ pression, ONE. And I think I have rea-  
 “ son to believe, that the present openly  
 “ avowed adherence of most established  
 “ churches to a doctrine, which does not  
 “ appear to have been the sentiment of chris-  
 “ tians in the earliest and the purest ages of  
 “ the church, is not only one of the most  
 “ powerful obstructions to the conversion of  
 “ the Mahometans and the Jews; but is also  
 “ an almost invincible objection to the cordial  
 “ reception of the gospel by many serious  
 “ well disposed persons, in every rank of  
 “ life, and in every state in Christendom.

“ Many worthy persons, who held the  
 “ foregoing opinion respecting the Deity,

“ are



“ are yet induced to believe that the Prayers  
 “ of Christians may with propriety be di-  
 “ rected to Jesus Christ; and imagine that  
 “ they may be vindicated in this practice  
 “ by the command of their Saviour, and  
 “ the example of his apostles.

“ With the utmost charity for those who  
 “ entertain these sentiments, I profess my-  
 “ self to be of a different opinion. I am sted-  
 “ fastly persuaded that the Creator of the  
 “ world, the God of Abraham, of Isaac,  
 “ and of Jacob, who is in the New Testa-  
 “ ment also stiled the God and Father of  
 “ our Lord Jesus Christ, is therein repre-  
 “ sented as the only proper object of reli-  
 “ gious adoration.”

“ I nevertheless acknowlege that a very  
 “ high degree of respect and veneration is  
 “ due to the character of Jesus, as the  
 “ anointed Prophet of the Most High, far  
 “ excelling in Dignity and Power every  
 “ Prophet who preceded him. I honour  
 “ him as the Son of God in what appears  
 “ to me the Scripture acceptation of that  
 “ term, as the common Lord of Christians,  
 “ as the appointed Judge of the Living and  
 “ the Dead. But at the same time I am

“ convinced that the distance between him  
 “ and Deity is INFINITE; that Prayer  
 “ to him is no where commanded in the  
 “ Scriptures; and, consequently, that the  
 “ addressees of Christians may with the same  
 “ propriety be directed to the Virgin Mary,  
 “ as to the Person of our Lord.”

“ Most of the clauses in the Litany, and  
 “ some other Prayers and Invocations in the  
 “ established Liturgy of the Church of Eng-  
 “ land, are immediately addressed to our Sa-  
 “ viour; and Honour and Glory are fre-  
 “ quently ascribed to the HOLY SPIRIT, as  
 “ to a DIVINE AGENT, distinct from the  
 “ Person of the Father; an Idea, in my  
 “ opinion, not warranted by the Oracles of  
 “ God.”

“ While I held Preferment, it certainly  
 “ was my duty to officiate in the established  
 “ service of the Church. But, oppressed  
 “ by the consciousness, that my sentiments,  
 “ respecting the Object of devotion, were  
 “ diametrically opposed to those doctrines,  
 “ upon which her Form of Worship is  
 “ founded, I have not been able, for some  
 “ time past, to discharge this part of my  
 “ Function without great disquiet. My  
 “ anxiety

“ anxiety hourly increased. I therefore at  
 “ length found it necessary to embrace the  
 “ only measure that seemed to promise me  
 “ tranquillity. The event hath correspond-  
 “ ed with my expectation. Having resigned  
 “ my Preferment, and with it having di-  
 “ vested myself of the Character of a Mi-  
 “ nister in the Church of England, I have  
 “ recovered that serenity of mind to which  
 “ I had been long a stranger.”

To whatever way of life Mr. Jebb had turned  
 himself afterwards, his great natural and ac-  
 quired powers, and above all, his resolution,  
 and indefatigable industry, must have ren-  
 dered him eminent in it. This was soon seen  
 in the line of Physic, which he chose. For  
 rarely ever did any one so early rank with  
 the first in his profession.

I hold it however to have been a great loss  
 to the christian world, that any thing should  
 have forced him away from the immediate  
 pursuit of sacred knowledge and study of the  
 Scriptures, and from communicating that  
 knowledge to others; for which he is so ad-  
 mirably furnished † and fitted. And much  
 does

† To this many of his pupils bear honourable testimo-  
 ny; and a lasting proof of it will remain in a tract, intitled



does he owe to his country, and to mankind, not to let that his great gift lie useleſs, and be buried with him.

Of his obligations in this reſpect, by his own expreſs and voluntary engagement, I would here beg leave to remind him, and at the ſame time gratify the reader, with the reaſons for breaking off all connection with the Church of England as a Miniſter, which he thought proper at the time to communicate to Dr. Young, his Dioceſan, the late Biſhop of Norwich.

(a) “ After the moſt ſerious and diſpaſſionate inquiry, I am perſuaded, my Lord, “ from the concurrent testimony of Reason “ and Revelation, that the SUPREME CAUSE “ of all things is, not merely in *Eſſence*, but alſo in *Perſon*, ONE.”

“ By the force of the ſame Evidence “ I am convinced, that this almighty “ Power is the *only* proper Object of Religion.”

“ A ſhort Account of Theological Lectures, now reading “ at Cambridge,” &c. By the Rev. John Jebb, M. A. late Fellow of St. Peter’s college, Cambridge. 1772.

(a) Id. Ibid. p. 17, 18.

“ The

“ The Liturgy of the Church of Eng-  
 “ land is obviously founded upon the Idea,  
 “ that in the Divine Nature is a TRINITY  
 “ of Persons, to each of which every spe-  
 “ cies of religious Adoration is addressed,  
 “ as well as such Powers ascribed, as are the  
 “ incommunicable attributes of God.”

“ Under my persuasion of the erroneouf-  
 “ ness of this doctrine, I cannot any longer  
 “ with satisfaction to myself officiate in the  
 “ Established Service: and as I certainly  
 “ can have no claim to the Emoluments of  
 “ my Profession, unless I am willing to  
 “ perform the Duties of it, I therefore re-  
 “ sign my Preferment.”

“ But, my Lord, although I find myself  
 “ under an obligation to relinquish my pre-  
 “ sent station in the church of England, I  
 “ do not renounce the Profession of a CHRIS-  
 “ TIAN. On the contrary, *penetrated by*  
 “ *the clearest convictions of the high Impor-*  
 “ *tance, and divine Authority of the Gospel,*  
 “ *I will labour to promote the advancement*  
 “ *of Scriptural Knowledge with increasing*  
 “ *zeal; and will ever be ready to unite,*  
 “ *with heart and hand, in any just and*  
 “ *legal attempt to remove that Burden of*

“ Subscription to Human Formularies, which  
 “ I esteem one of the most powerful ob-  
 “ structions to its Progress.”

## SECTION VI.

*Of Dr. Chambers.*

**T**HE order of time in which another Minister of the established church stood forth in the cause of the Divine Unity, although he did not resign his benefice, calls upon me here to make mention of *one*, whose memory is honoured by many, and will ever be fresh and dear to me; transporting oft with most pleasing recollection, to those once loved and ever honoured retreats, where congenial minds unite; where generally our first, our purest, and most lasting friendships are formed;

Where Camus winds along his broider'd vale,  
 Feeding each blue bell pale, and daisie pied,  
 That fling their fragrance round his rusby side.

But



But I shall preface what I have to say of him, with the recital of a conduct somewhat similar to his, to do justice to another unitarian and most upright person, who finished his mortal course in the time of our fathers; and to let it be seen, what an heavy burden it has long been to sincere searchers after truth, to be tied down to the use of forms of worship unknown to Christ and his apostles, and the wide deviations from them which some have been driven to make for the repose of their own minds, who did not think it incumbent on them to quit their benefices, and separate themselves entirely from the established church. It is furnished by Mr. Whiston, in the *Memoirs of his life*, p. 429.

Speaking of the learned critic Mr. *Wasse*, who had long been a warm defender of the *Athanasian* doctrine of the Trinity; he tells us, that this gentleman, who was Rector of Ainhoe, Bucks, was at last so thoroughly satisfied of the truth of the *Eusebian* doctrine, (for so Mr. Whiston loved to speak of his own opinion concerning Christ, which others called *Arian*,) that he (Mr. Wasse)

“ had not only a great while omitted the

“ *Athanasian* creed himself, and endeavour-  
 “ ed to persuade his neighbouring clergy  
 “ to omit it also ; but in my hearing (says  
 “ our Author) he publicly omitted in his  
 “ church at Ainhoe, both the third and  
 “ fourth petitions of the Litany, that to  
 “ the Holy Ghost, and that to the Tri-  
 “ nity, as knowing them to be intirely un-  
 “ justifiable and unexampled in primitive  
 “ christianity ; as I had done the very same  
 “ at Cambridge first, to the great surprize  
 “ and disorder of the whole university. He  
 “ also, after he was thus fully satisfied him-  
 “ self, offered, as he told me, to have de-  
 “ bated these matters with the late Archbp.  
 “ of Canterbury, Dr. Potter, then Regius  
 “ Professor of Divinity at Oxford, and  
 “ the other learned men there ; but they re-  
 “ fused.”

This was a noble effort for the times, in  
 this celebrated scholar and worthy man, to  
 act thus openly and without disguise, in leav-  
 ing out such parts of the public prayers and  
 worship of the church of England which  
 he believed to be uncountenanced by the  
 Scriptures, and directed to false objects; and  
 boldly to avow his sentiments and practice,  
 notwith-

notwithstanding the heavy penalties to which he was liable for it.

A like liberty was taken in altering the prayers in the Liturgy of the established church, by my late most highly valued and beloved friend, William Chambers, D. D. of St. John's college in the university of Cambridge, Rector of Achurch in Northamptonshire.

But in the changes that he made, he went much farther than Mr. Wasse, as his objections to the established forms of prayer were much greater. For he omitted the *Gloria Patri*, as it is called, which so frequently recurs ; and never repeated any part of the service, where Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit were addressed and invoked, being persuaded that the God and Father of all, was the only true God and object of worship.

He had been long resolved never to renew his subscription to the Articles, and declaration of conformity to the Liturgy, on any account whatsoever, and therefore had declined a considerable preferment in this city, which was offered to him by a noble Earl, his Relation. And he was prepared to have sub-

mitted



mitted to the extremity of the law, had it been put in execution against him, by resigning his benefice, rather than to have gone contrary to the sense of his own mind, in so solemn an act as that of prayer to the most high God.

The only time that I had the happiness of being with him in the country, after my settlement in London, I attended public worship in his church on the Sunday, with great satisfaction; for by the alterations he made in it, it was intirely conformable to the Scripture-model, and unitarian.

He was himself deeply impressed with a sense of the truth and importance of the doctrine of the *Divine Unity*, and was zealous to diffuse and impart his light and knowlege to others; and often successful in it. He had besides a thirst after all useful knowlege, and spared no pains or cost to attain it: yet still most concerned about what related to God, how best to serve and make him known, and to benefit mankind in their future everlasting concerns, which he was most studious to promote. And he had a mind always open to conviction; well knowing that we begin our rational life, full of many right, and oftentimes many dubious and false opinions,  
which

which we unavoidably take up on the authority of others, the only way in which we can at first learn any thing: and which it becomes us to try and examine into afterwards.

Above all sordid love of gain, he knew no other use of his fortune, after the necessary supplies of his family, than to make others happy. And he was remarkable for a constant cheerfulness, and innocent pleasantries that much enlivened conversation: which was in him the result of a natural gaiety of spirit, never broken or diminished by vice, or too eager worldly pursuits.

The respect and esteem in which he was deservedly held by all that knew him, was much heightened by his great skill in Physic, which he had acquired by the study of anatomy, chemistry, and all the previous knowledge requisite in the profession to qualify for practice in it. It was indeed an early and favourite pursuit; and I have been informed by those who were capable judges, that he had that natural sagacity in discerning the symptoms of diseases, which leads to excellence. He employed much of his leisure time this way in the country; both  
in

in communicating his knowlege to others, by which many are even now benefited, and in healing the diseases of the poor all around him, as well as of his friends and acquaintance who consulted him.

Let this short digression, and tribute to friendship, and to so much real worth, be excused! He died at Achurch, September 4, 1777, and was buried at Derby, the place of his nativity.

*Farewel virtuous and amiable Mind; till we meet again, in still happier and more durable scenes!*

## SECTION VII.

*Of Mr. Tyrrwhit, of Jesus College, Cambridge.*

WHERE truth and the good of mankind may be served, will be admitted a sufficient apology for drawing characters of eminent worth out of that concealment, in which their own amiable reserve and modesty too much confines them.

On



On this account, I trust Mr. Tyrrwhit will excuse this freedom, in one who can claim the honour of but little personal acquaintance with him, of such public mention of his name, and of stating some few things concerning him, which are of great notoriety within the walls of the university of Cambridge, and with those who for several years past have had connection with it; but are little known in the world at large: to which the writer wishes to speak, as he thinks the subject to be of moment.

When of no great standing in the University, this gentleman was led to see, that some of the Articles of the church of England were far from being in agreement with the holy Scriptures. The discovery did not check his ingenuous spirit from going on after this opening, to farther inquiry and examination, however likely in its progress to turn out unfavourable to his intended way of life and future prospects; till it issued in a full determination not to submit to those demands of Subscription and Conformity, a compliance with which would not have failed to have insured the first honours and emoluments of the established church, to  
one

one so deserving and accomplished, and a grandson withal of the most learned and pious Bishop Gibson.

Was I at liberty to mention some facts that I have been made acquainted with, it would be readily acknowledged how much this worthy person has sacrificed in respect of riches and worldly dignities, out of a principle of conscience and supreme regard to the Divine Will.

But it will sufficiently appear, and what has been advanced will be abundantly confirmed, by the testimony which a most intimate friend bore to his character before the public, eleven years ago; when, commending Mr. Tyrrhwit for his humane and generous, however unsuccessful, attempt to relieve the youth of the university from the obligation of subscribing the xxxix Articles of religion of the church of England, for their first degree, he thus speaks of him;

(b) “ With respect to the character of  
“ this gentleman, it may be justly said to  
“ be

(b) “ Letters on the subject of Subscription to the Liturgy and thirty-nine Articles of the church of England: first printed in the Whitehall Evening Post under the signature of *Paulinus*, now reprinted with notes and additions.” p. 43, note. London, printed 1772.

“ be above all praise. His strong abilities,  
 “ extensive learning, strict integrity, and  
 “ most amiable manners, united with cool  
 “ judgment and determined resolution,  
 “ would reflect lustre on the most distin-  
 “ guished station. And it is one of the  
 “ strongest reasons for the removal of Sub-  
 “ scriptions, that the imposition of human  
 “ formularies of faith and doctrine, and the  
 “ acknowledged imperfection in the forms of  
 “ public worship, deprive the church of  
 “ England of the honour any longer of  
 “ numbering among her worthies so truly  
 “ honest and venerable a man. I should  
 “ hurt his delicacy, were I to mention the  
 “ sacrifices he has made at the shrine of  
 “ integrity and honour; sacrifices only to  
 “ be equalled by those of the Rev. Dr.  
 “ Robertson, Author of a Tract intituled  
 “ An Attempt to explain the words *Reason*,  
 “ *Substance*, &c.” well worthy of the peru-  
 “ sal of every friend to religious liberty and  
 “ virtue.”

When called upon by the Statutes of the  
 University to perform the customary exer-  
 cise in the Divinity Schools, over which the  
 late Dr. Rutherford then presided, he pro-  
 posed



posed various questions of high importance to the Professor's acceptance. In many subsequent conversations with the Professor, who objected to his questions as improper subjects of disputation, his deportment was modest and unassuming, yet accompanied with that manly freedom, which has ever characterized his conduct. If my informant be accurate in his recollection, the first question he proposed was the same with that disputed on by Dr. Clarke upon a similar occasion; viz. (a) *Nullum fidei christianæ dogma, in S. Scripturis traditum, est rectæ rationi dissentaneum, i. e. No article of the christian faith, delivered in the Scriptures, is disagreeing with right reason.* A second asserted; that *no other confession of faith than an acknowledgement of belief in Jesus as the Messiah, was necessary for admission into a christian church.* And a third maintained; that *the prayers of christians ought to be directed to God alone, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Mr. Tyrrwhit for some time continued to keep his fellowship of Jesus college: but in the year 1777, he resigned it; conceiving that

(a) Dr. Clarke's Sermons, Vol. I. Preface, p. xx.

that it bound him to attendance upon the established service of the church in the college-chapel, which he could not conscientiously comply with. Thus from the same honourable and upright views, that had always directed his life and conduct, he resolved no longer to enjoy the lucrative advantages of his place, when he could not perform the duty it required.

He has now for many years intirely discontinued all attendance on the worship of the established church; not being able to satisfy his mind with joining in it.

His friend, whom I have above cited, and than whom none can be a more capable judge, has been often heard to say, that he knows not any equal master of Scripture learning, or so able an interpreter of the sacred Volume, as Mr. Tyrrhwit. Besides then that noble example of integrity, and testimony to the sole worship of the one living and true God, and Father of the universe, which he has long exhibited, we hope he will remember what farther demands his fellow-creatures have upon him for this great talent intrusted to him for the general good.

## SECTION VIII.

*Of Mr. Evanfon.*

**T**HE long malevolent profecution which this gentleman underwent for deviating in fome respects from the exprefs words of the Liturgy in his public miniftrations, and for fome truths unwelcome to a very fmall part of the congregation, uttered by him in his difcourfes from the pulpit, with all the circumftances attending that whole affair, have done great honour to him, as well as ferved the caufe of true religion, by awakening the attention of many to it, pointing what it was, and where to be learned.

How much approved and acceptable his character and labours were among his parifhioners as a gofpel teacher, appeared by the generous fupport which he met with from them under the troubles that were brought upon him, which he mentions frequently in his writings with gratitude. The  
title



title of his *Epistle Dedicatory* to a (c) small tract in vindication of himself runs thus :

“ To *William Buckle, Esq; Richard Jackson, Esq; D’Avenant Hankins, Esq; Mr. Richard Bayzand*, and the rest of the truly generous inhabitants of the parish of *Tewkesbury*, who defrayed the charges attending my defence against the late malevolent Prosecution.”

He had thus mentioned the same circumstance a year before in another work. (d)

“ In proof of the real decay of the spirit of antichristianism amongst us, as well as in justice (and, on my part, gratitude) to the parishioners of *Tewkesbury*, it ought to be observed, that the prosecution here mentioned was approved and encouraged only by a small party, whilst

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(c) “ The Sermon really preached in the Parish church of *Tewkesbury*, on Easter day, 1771, for which a Prosecution was commenced against the Preacher, Nov. 4, 1773; with an *Epistle Dedicatory*, &c. by *Edward Evanson, M. A.*

(d) A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of *Litchfield and Coventry*; wherein the importance of the prophecies of the New Testament, and the nature of the Grand Apostacy predicted in them, are particularly and impartially considered. By *Edward Evanson, M. A.* p. 128; *note.*

“ the majority, upon the first notice of it,  
 “ to their lasting honour, formally declared  
 “ their detestation of it in the public prints;  
 “ and with a most disinterested generosity,  
 “ and truly christianlike benevolence, vo-  
 “ luntarily raised among themselves a very  
 “ large sum, to defray the charges attend-  
 “ ing my defence.”

It was well that such a storm fell not upon a weak or timorous person who might have sunk under it; but upon one who had a manly spirit and courage to bear up against it, and was so able to defend himself in all points, especially by his writings.

What just and weighty cause this learned and worthy person had to wish for and seek to reduce the worship of the church of England to the standard of the holy Scriptures, appears from the following extract of his letter to Dr. Hurd, then Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry, now of Worcester; which deserves nothing less than the serious consideration of the whole christian world, while at the same time it shews the rare abilities and strong method of reasoning of the writer.

“ (e) Here, by the way, my Lord, I must take the liberty to point out a most essential defect

defect in the only argument, that I have ever seen or heard alleged to vindicate our own national church from that charge of idolatry, which hath of late been urged against her, for worshipping, as the one eternal God, a Being whom she herself avows to be a man. The argument is this: “ The  
 “ Scriptures of the New Testament, being  
 “ the inspired word of God, are our only  
 “ rule of belief and practice in the concerns  
 “ of religion. In some passages of those  
 “ Scriptures, this Man is called God; in  
 “ others, the incommunicable attributes of  
 “ the Deity are ascribed to him, not in a  
 “ figurative or secondary (as many good and  
 “ learned men in all ages have believed) but  
 “ in a primary and literal sense. However  
 “ incomprehensible therefore such a mysterious union of the two natures may be to  
 “ us, since the holy Scriptures expressly  
 “ teach us that this *Man* is also the only  
 “ true *God*, it is so far from criminal in us,  
 “ that it is our indispensable duty to acknowledge and worship him as such.”

“ All those, (and a very numerous body they are) whose indolent indifference, whose



habitual prejudices, or whose personal interest incline them to wish the established mode of worship right, may perhaps be thoroughly satisfied with this way of reasoning, according to that most just maxim, *facile credimus quod volumus*. But a mind divested of partiality and prepossession, my Lord, will be apt to carry the question much higher. It will observe, that though the Gospel be a revelation of the Divine will, yet it is not the first revelation which God hath vouchsafed to make; that, since the eternal Deity is altogether immutable both in nature and in will, he cannot contradict himself; and consequently, it is impossible, that any genuine, subsequent revelation, should make that a virtue and a religious duty, which a prior revelation hath prohibited as an heinous sin, and declared to be a blasphemous impiety. The first and most important question therefore in this controversy is, whether the worshipping a *Man* as *God*, or the one Almighty God as having the nature and bodily form of a man, be the crime prohibited, under the Mosaic covenant, by the name of *idolatry*? For if it be, it must remain a crime to all eternity: and had the  
first

first preachers of the gospel really enjoined it, it would have been our duty to have renounced and abominated their doctrine, upon the very same principle, on which St. Paul directs the Galatians to regard as accursed every doctrine which contradicted the Gospel which had been first preached to them, though it should be taught them by the apostles themselves, or even by (*f*) *an angel from heaven*. If therefore the doctrine of the *incarnation of God* be really taught in any Scriptures of the New Testament, and the worshiping the unchangeable Deity agreeably to that doctrine, be *idolatry*, according to the Old Testament, those Scriptures are so far from affording us sufficient warrant for admitting such a doctrine, that the doctrine itself affords the strongest reason that can be, for our rejecting every Scripture that teacheth it, as most assuredly spurious and false."

" Let us consider then, how the case stood under the Law of Moses. We there find *idolatry* so repeatedly prohibited, so signally and severely punished, and so continually represented as a most heinous sin, that

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(*f*) Galatians i. 8.

the great end of the divine dispensation under the Old Testament seems to have been, to eradicate from the Jewish people all propensity to an idolatrous worship of the eternal Deity, and by their means to establish amongst mankind just and worthy ideas of the invisible, omnipresent author and preserver of existence. Accordingly, (as the counsels of omnipotence must ever do) it is well known to have actually produced the effect intended; for, from the Babylonish captivity to the present hour, the Jews have not only shewn no inclination to, but constantly manifested the utmost abhorrence from *idolatry* of every kind."

"To understand the true nature of that impious crime, which is denominated idolatry in the Old Testament, we need only attend to the two first precepts of the Decalogue, which we, as well as the Jews acknowledge to be the *Law of God*."

"The first of these prohibits *Polytheism*. Now the Polytheist, in order to distinguish his variety of Deities from each other, must necessarily conceive them to be of different natures, attributes, and forms. The object of his adoration therefore, instead of being  
infinite



infinite and incomprehensible, are discernible and distinguishable by the faculties of his mind: and with the statuary's' or the painter's help, he is able to exhibit a visible representation of the several Gods he worships. Consequently, whether the artist's aid be called in or not, every polytheist must needs be an *idolater*. The first species of idolatry then, and that which, together with polytheism, is solemnly forbidden in the first commandment, consists in worshiping any thing whatsoever *as God*, besides the one incorporeal, uncompounded, infinite Being, by whom this Law was given, whether it be a thing actually created, or the mere creature of our own imagination. If therefore the Catholic Orthodox Church worshipeth a compound God; if she worshipeth an human, and consequently a created being as the true *God*; if she personifies, and makes a distinct object of adoration of the extraordinary influence of the Divine power over the affairs of men, (and that she doth the two first of these, at least, cannot be denied); she is guilty of the *idolatry* prohibited by this Commandment, and so far answers the description given of the Anti-christian

christian Church in the prophetic vision of St. John."

" But though polytheism necessarily implies idolatry, yet it is certain that *idolatry* may subsist without polytheism ; for a man, who acknowledges and worships only one God, *may* think of that God so unworthily as to imagine him embodied in a material frame, and clothed with the nature and passions of a created being. The object of every such person's worship is, in his own idea, evidently an *idol*; and he wants only the skill of the artist to produce a sensible delineation of the peculiar form and features, or to erect an image of the Deity he adores. To worship the one true God, therefore, under any bodily form whatever, is another species of *idolatry*, made highly criminal by the Mosaic revelation, repeatedly said to be *blaspheming* him ; and which on account of its injurious derogation from the nature and attributes of the Almighty, and of its pernicious influence upon the religious tenets, and consequently upon the minds and morals of mankind, is, in the second Commandment, represented as more especially displeasing to our Creator, and prohibited with  
a de-

a denunciation of a peculiar vengeance against it. Of this kind of idolatry also, offensive as it is declared to be to Heaven, the whole orthodox church is unquestionably guilty, for she avowedly worships the one true *God* as incarnate in the body of a *man*. The members of the church of Rome make no scruple of using sensible representations of this incarnate object of their adoration: and your Lordship hath suggested, that, possibly, their church may, on that account, deserve the charge of idolatry alleged in this Prophecy, against the church of Antichrist. However, with a prudent caution, observable in more than one passage of your Lordship's highly polished discourses, you decline insisting upon that circumstance; although, if we except the above mentioned transgression of the first Commandment, it is the only *idolatry*, properly so called, of which she is or can be guilty. For since the crime of *idolatry* manifestly consists, either in worshiping as *God* something which is not *God*, or in worshiping the true *God* under a bodily form; with respect to the petitions, which the Church of Rome offers to deceased saints and martyrs, if she  
adores



adores them as a kind of tutelar, though inferior *deities*, (as the Monkish divines of Africa, in the fourth century, from whom she received the practice, most certainly did) she then, indeed, is guilty of a greater degree of *polytheistic idolatry* than the Protestants can be charged with ; but if, as she herself declares, she really applies to them not as *gods*, but merely as *mediators* between God and men, whatever offence she may commit against the one mediator of the Christian Covenant, whatever folly it may be to address herself to those who, as far as she hath any just reason to think, are incapable of hearing her, she is not, on that account, guilty of the sin prohibited under the name of *idolatry*. But your Lordship, no doubt, foresaw that a direct accusation of worshiping the true God under a bodily form, brought against the Church of Rome, would assuredly draw after it a similar charge against other orthodox churches : for when the Protestants invoke the one almighty Lord of heaven and earth by his *nativity and circumcision*, his *agony and bloody sweat*, his *death and burial*, they represent to us the *bodily form* of their Deity, as plainly as if they

they placed a crucifix before our eyes. And, accordingly, your Lordship well knows, they are not the churches and books of devotion of the Roman Catholics only, in which images and pictures are to be found of the *Human Deity*, or the *God-Man*, as the orthodox affect to call him, whom both Papists and Protestants adore as the only true God."

After such a description of the wretched condition of apostacy from the worship of the one true God, in which the christian world in general lies, it would be injurious to the benevolent mind and good sense of our author, to omit his candid apology for those who are ignorantly involved in it, which he afterwards offers.

" I would willingly (says Mr. Evanfon again to the Bishop) guard against one species of censure, which I think it not unlikely these pages may excite against me, and which I should be very sorry to be thought to deserve."

" In religious controversies, it hath been so long the custom to predetermine the sentence of the last day, and in the genuine, uncharitable, contracted spirit of Antichristianism,

tianism, to condemn all who differ from ourselves in opinion, to suffer eternal torments in the world to come; declaring that *they cannot be saved*, and must, *without doubt, perish everlastingly*; that, when I attempt to prove the religious doctrines established among us by law to be *blasphemy*, and the orthodox mode of worshiping God to be *idolatry*, I may, perhaps, be supposed to accuse the several members of our legislature, and every individual professor of the *Catholic belief*, of the guilt of those heinous sins; and to insinuate, that, at the day of judgment, they will be condemned to endure everlasting punishment as *idolaters* and *blasphemers*. But, though the opinions of men cannot alter the nature of things, nor prevent the many pernicious effects, which a false religion and superstitious notions of the Deity, must ever have upon the minds and morals of the generality of the people, yet I am sensible how indispensably requisite an evil intention is to constitute crime: and I know, by experience, that, where the most *blasphemous idolatry* is once adopted and made familiar by habit, it may be practised by good men  
with



with the sincerest piety and best intentions in the world."

"The religion of Jesus Christ teacheth me, that the same God, who winked at idolatry in the times of pagan ignorance, will make the like merciful allowances for the influence of that unhappy *delusion*, which he predicted by his prophets, and through which (no doubt for wise and good reasons) he hath thought fit to suffer his creatures to be so long deceived. And my hope is, to participate the blessings of a future state of existence together with your Lordship and every other virtuous and amiable man, not only of every religious persuasion, but even of none at all. For I cannot help concluding, that the benevolent Father and merciful judge of all men will be, at least, as indulgent to those Deists, who, making a free and candid use of the rational faculties with which he hath endowed them, refuse their assent where their mind is unconvinced, and reject the truth of divine revelation, which is shewn them only through the medium of error; as to the professors of the *anticristian* faith, who, led on by habit, in direct contradiction

tradition to their reason, embrace error instead of truth."

In a preceding part of this letter Mr. Evanfon intimates that but for the delay of the tedious prosecution commenced against him in the ecclesiastical courts, " he (g) should not have been regardless of that pathetic, heavenly admonition, which, in the Bishop's opinion, made it the duty of the Protestants to separate from the communion of the church Rome." And that being ended, he did immediately, as himself in one place speaks, " make a sacrifice of his worldly interest to his christian duty," resigning his present preferment and those reasonable expectations of advancement which one of his uncommon talents might have entertained; and has since devoted himself to the painful office of instructing youth, for which he is eminently qualified, an office seldom considered and rewarded as it ought to be; whilst fitted to serve his country in any other province, though none certainly more honourable and useful than to be employed in  
instilling

(g) *Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* Rev. xviii. 4. Id. Ibid. p. 130.

instilling useful knowledge into the human mind, and forming it to truth and virtue.

In this capacity, and in a most pleasant and healthy situation, about ten miles from this Metropolis, Mr. Evanfon has public Divine Service in his own house on the Sundays, in which he makes use of “ The Book of Common Prayer reformed according to the Plan of the late Dr. Clarke.” But at the same time, he has a proper person ready to attend, and to take care of any of the youth, whose parents would chuse to have them frequent the worship of the church of England.

Although I have already cited so much from this valuable writer, I must add a short preface to one of his discourses to his parishioners, on Acts ii. 36.

(b) “ It has been objected to me, by some of those who have been produced by my prosecutors to bear testimony against me, that I have sometimes, in my discourses from this place, compared our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ to Moses. That I have

(b) “ The Sermon really preached in the Parish church of Tewkesbury, &c.” Preface, p. xii. *Note,*



done so is strictly true; and for very sufficient reason, *viz.* because I have in the most solemn manner vowed to instruct the people committed to my charge out of the holy Scriptures, and to teach them only what is agreeable to the word of God. But what excites both my surprize and concern is, to find, that any christian in this protestant country, with the Bible in his own hands, should be so intirely ignorant of the very fundamental article of the religion he professes, as to think such a comparison criminal in a minister of the gospel. How far it may be consistent with human systems of Theology, to assert that Jesus Christ (*i*) was a Jewish prophet like unto Moses, let them consider, who having in their infancy been taught those systems, are resolved, at all adventures, to adhere to them in maturer age, without ever candidly examining whether they are right or wrong. And let them consider also, that for every wilful abuse of

(*i*) Stephen, in his defence of himself, applies that declaration of Moses to Christ, *viz.* “ *A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.*” Acts vii. 37.

the understanding he hath given them, God will bring men into judgment. For my own part, I know no other fit rule of doctrine for a public teacher, nor any other secure foundation of a christian's faith, besides the plain and express words of the sacred Scriptures ; and if the likening of Jesus Christ to Moses, is to teach *Socinian doctrines*, it must inevitably follow from the whole scope of St. Peter's argument in the passage from whence I have taken the words of the text, that *Socinian doctrines* were taught by God Almighty himself under the Old Testament, and by the apostles of Jesus Christ under the New."

## SECTION IX.

*Of Mr. Maty.*

**T**HIS ingenious, excellent scholar, and worthy character, is too well known to need any commendations of mine to point him out. Professing however a sincere es-

teem for him, from some little personal knowlege, I have a real pleasure in inserting his name in the list of Worthies, who have borne open testimony, to their worldly loss, against the impositions of human authority in the things of religion, especially against the corruptions thereby introduced with respect to the *Divine Unity*. And although his objections to the subscribing of the XXXIX. articles of faith, and scruples concerning conformity to the established church, have not risen so high as my own, and those of some others, they could not have been inconsiderable which obliged him to a separation from it.

On such occasions, it is highly useful, for different persons to publish their respective motives, which influenced them. Those who have the means of redressing what is amiss in public systems of religion, and forms of worship, have thereby the opportunity of coming at the knowlege of what is unscriptural and unjustifiable in them; truth stands the fairest chance to come out and spread itself; and each private individual is called upon to examine and judge for himself;



self; which is the only way of becoming settled in it.

In this view, Mr. Maty's "Reasons for separating from the established church," are very deserving of attention, though one cannot but wish they had not been so very briefly stated, as to make only a small article in a periodical publication. His modesty however is herein very conspicuous; as is the moderation of his mind, in the intire omission of one circumstance relating to himself. For he drops not the least intimation of his relinquishing a situation, out of a principle of conscience, which was the natural unfailing road to great emoluments and dignities in the church, sometimes to the very highest; as he was at the time chaplain to Lord Stormont, the English Ambassador at Paris; nor takes any notice of the great change which such a step would make in his circumstances, and the necessity it would lay him under to seek out a new line of life to provide for himself and family; but contents himself with reciting a plain concise narrative of the motives which constrained him to decline any longer the officiating as

Minister, according to the established Liturgy of the church of England.

It will be proper for me to cite the whole account which he judged fitting to lay before the public on the occasion ; and I have no doubt therein of obliging many, who might not hear of it at the time, or might not be in the habit of looking into our monthly publications.

It is in the “ Gentleman’s Magazine for October, 1777, and begins thus—p. 466.

“ *British Museum, Oct. 22, 1777.*

“ I should neither have withdrawn myself from the ministry of the Church of  
“ England, nor have troubled the public  
“ with my reasons for so doing, if I had not  
“ thought myself obliged to both. I trust,  
“ therefore, that both the step itself, and  
“ this account of my motives for taking it  
“ will be treated with candour.

“ As a Christian thoroughly satisfied with  
“ the evidence, and deeply solicitous about  
“ the success of whatever had a tendency  
“ to promote the cause of Christianity, I  
“ thought myself called upon to study the  
“ controversy about Subscriptions. The  
“ following

“ following is an account of the effect that  
 “ study has had upon my mind, which I  
 “ offer as a vindication of my own conduct  
 “ only, and hope it will be accepted as such.

“ I have no objection to subscriptions in  
 “ general to articles of faith, which, not-  
 “ withstanding what has been urged against  
 “ them by Burnet, the masterly author of the  
 “ Confessional, and others, seem to me both  
 “ lawful and expedient; all the arguments  
 “ that have been brought against them tend-  
 “ ing only to prove that their use has been  
 “ less hitherto than it might have been,  
 “ owing to the narrow principles on which  
 “ they have been framed; considerations  
 “ which, in my opinion, do not outweigh  
 “ the objections stated by Dr. Balguy to  
 “ having none at all.

“ But satisfied as I should be, for my-  
 “ self, with a subscription of some sort, and  
 “ probably not a very general one neither,  
 “ I cannot comply with that required of  
 “ me to the present articles and liturgy for  
 “ the following reasons.

“ First, After bestowing all the pains  
 “ which I am able to give in informing my-  
 “ self of what is the true Scripture doctrine



“ of the Trinity, the only conclusion I have  
 “ been able to arrive at is, that I see no  
 “ sufficient proof of the Athanasian, and  
 “ rather incline to the Arian hypothesis.

“ 2dly, I am clear, that the very dange-  
 “ rous doctrine that unbaptized children are  
 “ subject to the penalties of sin, is asserted  
 “ in the 9th article, and still more strongly  
 “ in the service for the public baptism of  
 “ infants; and that it is not taught in the  
 “ Bible.

“ 3dly, I cannot help thinking, notwith-  
 “ standing what has been written by Dr.  
 “ Tucker and others, upon the subject, that  
 “ the 17th article does teach absolute pre-  
 “ destination; a doctrine likewise not found  
 “ in the Bible, and of a still more destruc-  
 “ tive tendency than that of original sin.—  
 “ These are my principal objections: I have  
 “ others to many parts of the service, but  
 “ do not mention them, partly because they  
 “ are to things generally complained of,  
 “ and which will probably be removed  
 “ whenever a revision takes place; and partly  
 “ because I do not know how far, had they  
 “ been the only ones, they would have led  
 “ me to think of a separation.

“ This

“ This separation I do now think myself  
 “ authorized to; because, believing the doc-  
 “ trines themselves to be erroneous, I am  
 “ not satisfied with any reasons that I have  
 “ seen given for continuing to subscribe  
 “ them under such a persuasion. I cannot  
 “ be thoroughly satisfied, that either the  
 “ words in which it is drawn, or the King’s  
 “ declaration, justify me, who think with  
 “ Arminius on the subject, in subscribing  
 “ the 17th article; the more, as it is a sub-  
 “ ject which, in my opinion, *is to be dis-*  
 “ *puted upon*, and the *obvious sense of the*  
 “ *article preached against*, whenever oppor-  
 “ tunity offers.

“ If the plea made for subscribing this  
 “ one could avail me, I have no such plea  
 “ for subscribing the articles relative to the  
 “ Trinity, or continuing to read the parts  
 “ of the liturgy relative either to them or  
 “ the doctrine of original sin. These were  
 “ not subjects of dispute at the time the  
 “ articles were drawn, and of course no salvo  
 “ was made for them, except the general  
 “ one of the sixth article. But surely Dr.  
 “ Waterland very fully confuted Dr. Clarke’s  
 “ ideas on this subject, in his case of Arian  
 “ subscrip-

“ subscriptions; and if he had not, the  
 “ author of the Confessional has unanswer-  
 “ ably proved, that, if the sixth article had  
 “ been designed to justify those who, wil-  
 “ lingly binding themselves to support the  
 “ opinions of the majority, propagate opi-  
 “ nions different from theirs, it might have  
 “ justified the Roman Catholics, it might  
 “ have justified the first seditious and mad  
 “ disgracers of Protestantism, whereas a-  
 “ gainst both these the articles are well  
 “ known to have been made. Neither Dr.  
 “ Powell’s plea in favour of first subscrip-  
 “ tions, nor Mr. Hey’s considerations on  
 “ obsolete ordinances, can be of service to  
 “ me, who at this time of life am not at  
 “ liberty to subscribe upon authority, and  
 “ whose objections both to articles and li-  
 “ turgy are too extensive to find a solution  
 “ in the doctrine of obsolete ordinances.

“ Finally, I can neither submit to ac-  
 “ quiesce in silence, after having made my  
 “ objections known, nor take upon me to  
 “ alter the service of the Church as long as  
 “ I continue to profess myself a minister of  
 “ it. The latter, besides its being of dan-  
 “ gerous example, I rather think my vo-

“ luntary



“ luntary promise to use the established li-  
 “ turgy precludes me from. With the for-  
 “ mer I could only have been satisfied upon  
 “ the supposition that the things complained  
 “ of were indifferent, or, as they have been  
 “ thought to be by many good men, of lit-  
 “ tle importance; but as I should in that  
 “ case have thought it my duty to have  
 “ waited for a change by public authority,  
 “ without expressing any disapprobation  
 “ public or private, so being of a very dif-  
 “ ferent opinion, that is, believing firmly  
 “ that some of the obnoxious doctrines  
 “ strike at the root of all religion, natural  
 “ as well as revealed, and that nothing is of  
 “ little importance which the Deists and  
 “ Methodists can make so formidable use of  
 “ as they are known to do of the subscrip-  
 “ tions of those amongst us who subscribe  
 “ what they profess not to believe; under  
 “ these circumstances I have nothing left  
 “ me but the part on which I have deter-  
 “ mined, and that is,

“ To withdraw myself from ministering  
 “ in the Church of England, either till our  
 “ forms shall have undergone such a revision  
 “ and

“ and alteration as I think they stand in need  
 “ of, or till time and farther study shall  
 “ have prevailed upon me to view them in  
 “ a different light from what I can do at  
 “ present.

“ This I therefore thus publicly declare  
 “ that I do, with becoming humility, with  
 “ the utmost diffidence and regret for dif-  
 “ fering from such numbers of wise and  
 “ good men, and with the resolution to  
 “ persist in such studies as may best serve  
 “ the general cause of religion, at the same  
 “ time that they bid fairest for affording my  
 “ own mind the conviction none can more  
 “ ardently wish me than myself.

“ I will only add, that I do not mean to  
 “ preclude myself from officiating in any  
 “ other Protestant congregation; on the  
 “ contrary, should I see reason to believe  
 “ that there is any number of pious people  
 “ disposed to attend a place of public wor-  
 “ ship, where a liturgy, not materially dif-  
 “ ferent from Dr. Clarke's, shall be used,  
 “ I will take the first opportunity which  
 “ presents itself of opening a place of pub-  
 “ lic worship with such a liturgy. In this  
 “ I shall

“ I shall do no more than follow that strong  
 “ inclination which first led me to adopt,  
 “ and will ever incline me to return to, the  
 “ most pleasing, the most honourable, the  
 “ most useful of all occupations.”

HENRY MATY.

## SECTION X.

*Of Mr. Harries.*

THE doctrine concerning the One only true God, and Father of all, and the worship of him alone, taught and practised by Christ and his apostles, which has been so much, and for so many ages corrupted, is now set in so strong and convincing a light, as the very doctrine of the Scriptures throughout, by the labours of learned men among us for near a century past, that it cannot fail of being in no long time very generally acknowledged and received.

And



And the consequence of this will be, with all serious considerate christians, if there be no alteration in the Trinitarian forms of worship required or prescribed by the churches of England or Scotland; that while some with difficulty and much anxiety will continue in their communion, many will be driven to seek a church elsewhere, or to make one for themselves in their houses, with which they can serve God with a quiet mind.

This has been the effect already in the University of Cambridge in particular, among many of those who were intended for the ministry. For some have been wholly discouraged thereby from engaging in it. Others, having taken orders, and for some time officiated in the church, have stopped short, and declined all farther ministerial duty in it; and some of these have given up their function intirely, and betaken themselves to other professions. I have been made acquainted with the names of several of these worthy conscientious characters, but do not think myself at liberty to mention them, as they are persons wholly unknown to me.

One

One however I may name, not unknown, a gentleman of great worth and integrity, Mr. Halls, educated at St. John's college in Cambridge, and agreeably situated in a curacy at no great distance from London, with respectable connections and prospects of preferment, who a few years ago, unable, with any peace of mind, to minister or to join in the Trinitarian forms of worship, was constrained to separate himself intirely from the established church, and by this step to subject himself and a growing young family to the difficulties and inconveniencies of a very narrow fortune.

The truly valuable character, whose name I have taken the liberty to prefix to this Section, I first heard of by means of an excellent person, a friend to virtue, and true religion, and every good design, (a) William Tayleur of Shrewsbury, Esq; who was formerly

(a) This gentleman, of an independent fortune, and most generous spirit, whose name reflects credit on any cause he espouses, was an early encourager of the Unitarian worship in Essex-Street, and one of the principal Benefactors to the new chapel which has been erected there. The writer, although hitherto in person unknown to him, looks upon his friendship as a peculiar honour and happiness, and hopes he will excuse this almost unavoidable public mention of him.

merly of the church of England, but after having been long dissatisfied with joining in the worship of any other God but the one only true God and Father of all, who is above all, has for a few years past been member of a Dissenting Unitarian congregation in Shrewsbury.

Upon intimating in a letter, that it was much to be lamented, that such praise-worthy and virtuous actions, as the resignation which Mr. Harries had then lately made, should not be more generally known, Mr. Tayleur procured for me the following obliging communications from that gentleman himself, with a permission to make what use of them I pleased. Some hesitation only was expressed about the propriety of publishing his Diocesan's letter to him without leave. But upon the consideration that there was nothing of a private nature in it, nor any thing but what did honour to the Bishop, who could not have said less, if he took any notice at all of Mr. Harries's irregularity in reading the service of the church; it was concluded, that there could be nothing blameable in itself, or offensive to the Bishop in printing the letter.



*A Letter from Mr. Harries, with some account of himself, and of his reasons for quitting the church of England.*

“ Hanwood, near Shrewsbury,

“ 5th December, 1782.

“ Dear Sir,

“ My esteemed friend Mr. Tayleur communicated to me that part of your letter to him, in which you express a desire to be informed of the circumstances attending my resignation of my preferment in the church. I can communicate my sentiments to you with the most unreserved freedom.

“ \* \* \* \* \*

“ Your publications have contributed to establish me in those religious sentiments, from which I now derive the utmost consolation. I will give you a short sketch of the history of my life, (so far as relates to my profession,) from my entrance at the university of Cambridge in the year 1760. I was intended by my friends for the practice of physick; but very soon after my residence at college, in compliance with my solicitations, they consented

M m

“ to

“ to my request of taking orders. After a  
 “ continuance there of five years, I was or-  
 “ dained, and promoted early to the rectory  
 “ of Hanwood. At that time I subscribed  
 “ the Articles, and went through the form  
 “ of institution, &c. justified, as I then  
 “ thought, by the sanction of my superiors in  
 “ ability, learning, and worth. Indeed the  
 “ objections I have since imbibed concerning  
 “ them, had not then made any impression on  
 “ me; nor had I any scruples when I was  
 “ presented to the vicarage of Cleobury Mor-  
 “ timer in 1769, which I resigned in 1779,  
 “ in consequence of a promise made when I  
 “ accepted it, that if I could not reside there,  
 “ I would relinquish it when called upon.”

“ Many years since, I accidentally took  
 “ up the life of John Bunce; as I went on  
 “ it excited my curiosity and attention. Your  
 “ *Apology* came out soon after. Your sub-  
 “ sequent publications, and a careful exami-  
 “ nation of the Scriptures, convinced me,  
 “ that the doctrine of the Trinity, Atone-  
 “ ment, &c. as laid down in the Articles  
 “ \* \* \* \* \* have no foundation  
 “ in Scripture. I became likewise dissatisfied  
 “ with some parts of the liturgy. I expressed

“ in conversation with some friends, my ear-  
 “ nest desire that subscription, to the present  
 “ articles might be abolished, and some  
 “ things in the Common Prayer omitted or  
 “ altered. I went on however in this state  
 “ of mind, for some years, in pretty strict  
 “ conformity to the rubrick. And with  
 “ compunction I acknowledge, that regard to  
 “ a near friend induced me to subscribe these  
 “ articles, upon accepting two perpetual  
 “ cures, with the strongest conviction on my  
 “ mind, that they contained what I believed  
 “ were falsehoods. But I hope to be exculpated  
 “ from selfish views, when I declare, I did  
 “ not mean to make any advantage of them,  
 “ nor have they benefited me more than  
 “ twenty or thirty pounds.”

“ The reformed liturgy being introduced  
 “ by Mr. Tayleur at the chapel of the Dis-  
 “ senters in Shrewsbury, occasioned much  
 “ conversation on the subject. I openly  
 “ acknowledged that it had my entire appro-  
 “ bation. Soon after, I began to model  
 “ the established Liturgy in conformity to  
 “ it. At first, I omitted the Nicene Creed,  
 “ the Gloria Patri, &c. and by degrees all  
 “ such parts where religious worship is paid



“ to any other God, than the *Father* only.  
 “ I gave my congregation my reasons for  
 “ doing so, acknowledged to them, that it  
 “ was contrary to my declarations of con-  
 “ formity, and told them, that if they were  
 “ dissatisfied with my conduct, or my supe-  
 “ riors thought me unworthy to continue  
 “ in the church, I would quietly resign my  
 “ preferment. I have reason to believe there  
 “ were scarce any of my hearers that were  
 “ displeased, and I do not consider any of  
 “ them as my dark accusers. Though I  
 “ knew this could not avoid being public-  
 “ ly known, yet I supposed the smallness  
 “ of my preferment could not render me an  
 “ object of envy or resentment. I will an-  
 “ nex the virulent letter of mine anonymous  
 “ accuser. Who he is, I have never given  
 “ myself leave to conjecture. I will like-  
 “ wise add his Lordship’s letter to me, and  
 “ my answer to it.

“ Those who are sparing of their com-  
 “ mendations will say, What a mighty sacri-  
 “ fice truly ? 40l. per annum, from a man of  
 “ fortune, who may have other pursuits or  
 “ expectations to make him ample amends !  
 “ The value of the living I have resigned  
 “ is

“ is 60*l.* per annum, and the cures 70*l.*  
 “ per annum: I might have cleared from  
 “ them near 100*l.* per annum. I assure  
 “ you this is no inconsiderable object to  
 “ one, who by a loss of the tenderest kind,  
 “ hath likewise lost the only part of his  
 “ fortune, that is at present valuable, and  
 “ who hath three younger children to pro-  
 “ vide for. Besides, though when in afflu-  
 “ ence I never sought or desired farther  
 “ preferment; yet upon my sad reverse of  
 “ fortune, my friends recommended to me,  
 “ to push my fortune amongst those patrons  
 “ of the church, whose assistance they  
 “ thought I might ask. My answer was,  
 “ I was determined never again to make  
 “ subscriptions and declarations contrary to  
 “ the conviction of my own mind. I have  
 “ no lucrative scheme in view. I have  
 “ nearly finished a habitation for my resi-  
 “ dence, in the parish of Hanwood. There  
 “ I will worship God according to my con-  
 “ science, with my small family, and those  
 “ few neighbours who may be inclined to  
 “ join with me, but without the least hope  
 “ of any pecuniary reward. I have earnestly  
 “ exhorted them, that no deference or regard

“ to me, should prevail over their real sen-  
 “ timents. But if there were amongst  
 “ them, that from conviction preferred a  
 “ service to their Maker, upon the model  
 “ they had been for some time used to, I  
 “ should think it a desertion of my duty,  
 “ not to give them an opportunity of con-  
 “ forming to it.

“ You say, “ that such noble deeds as  
 “ mine should not be lost to the world.”  
 “ I have no other merit to plead, than an  
 “ openness and sincerity of conduct. If  
 “ you think my example will have any  
 “ effect in exciting the attention of others,  
 “ or towards removing those stumbling-  
 “ blocks, that contribute to prevent christi-  
 “ anity from becoming the universal reli-  
 “ gion of mankind, you have my permission  
 “ to speak of it, (*b*) in a lowly way. I am  
 “ conscious that my abilities and knowledge  
 “ are humble. I am very desirous to avoid  
 “ angry

(*b*) The writer of this work trusts the like candid con-  
 clusions will be made for the unavoidable exhibition of the  
 too favourable sentiments others have expressed for himself.  
 He should have felt much easier in omitting them all, if  
 it could have been done without destroying the force  
 of the narrative in which they were included.



“ angry controversy, and indeed will never  
 “ engage in it. Instead of mending the  
 “ heart it tends to embitter and sour it. I  
 “ greatly rejoice that you have got a fel-  
 “ low-labourer in the cause of the *One* true  
 “ God.

“ E. Harries.”

*An anonymous Letter to the Bishop of Hereford.*

“ My Lord,

“ For a subject to hear with unconcern  
 “ his Sovereign undeservedly ridiculed,  
 “ would certainly be deemed disloyal and  
 “ tacitly criminal; how much more so  
 “ would it be to hear with unmoving apathy  
 “ the King of kings and great Judge of the  
 “ world treated with contempt?”

“ This consideration, I doubt not, will  
 “ sufficiently apologize for the following  
 “ disagreeable information.”

“ It is with regret that I can assure your  
 “ Lordship, that the Rev. Mr. Harries,  
 “ Rector of Hanwood near Shrewsbury, does  
 “ not only hold dangerous tenets in religion,

“ but openly and publickly in his church  
 “ denies the divinity of our blessed Saviour,  
 “ and daringly disowns the sacred Trinity,  
 “ and constantly for some time past has omit-  
 “ ted reading such parts of the Litany and  
 “ other parts of the Liturgy wherein the di-  
 “ vinity of the second and third persons in  
 “ the sacred Trinity are exprest. Our blessed  
 “ Lord expressly commandeth “ that all  
 “ men should honour the Son as they honour  
 “ the Father. He that honoureth not the  
 “ Son honoureth not the Father, who hath  
 “ sent him.” But need I quote Scripture,  
 “ when your Lordship well knoweth, that  
 “ whoever denies the divinity of our blessed  
 “ Saviour must also deny the Old and New  
 “ Testaments, together with the Articles and  
 “ Homilies of our holy Religion. Now if  
 “ such W. in sheeps cloathing be suffered to  
 “ spread their diabolical doctrine amongst  
 “ the flock, how epidemical might the con-  
 “ tagion prove! But this I know, that it is  
 “ in your Lordship’s power, when you have  
 “ cognizance thereof, to redress such real spi-  
 “ ritual grievances. And that this might  
 “ speedily be done, for the honour of our  
 “ Lord, the good of our Sion, and for the  
 “ safety

“ safety of your Lordship’s own soul, is  
 “ the fervent prayer of

“ Your Lordship’s most obedient  
*Salop, Jan. 3. 1782.* “ and most humble Servant.

“ P. S. His Lordship I hope will not be  
 “ offended, if I remind him of the 2d chap-  
 “ ter of the Apocalypse, ver. 14, 15, and  
 “ 20. where something similar might be ap-  
 “ plied to all the Right Reverends who suffer  
 “ any of the inferior clergy (that hold and  
 “ preach doctrine repugnant to Scripture) to  
 “ seduce the laity of their diocese.”

*The Bishop of Hereford’s Letter to Mr. Har-  
 ries, inclosing the above Letter.*

“ Rev. Sir, Hereford, Feb. 20, 1782.  
 “ The inclosed, as you will see by the  
 “ date of it, I received some time ago, and  
 “ should have been sent to you sooner, had I  
 “ not mislaid it. Anonymous letters in ge-  
 “ neral I pay little regard to; this requires  
 “ some notice to be taken of it, though all  
 “ that I can at present say is, that I would  
 “ have you to be cautious in future, if you  
 “ have been faulty in the particulars menti-  
 “ oned in the letter. I mention it now in the  
 “ mildest



“ mildest terms; but give me leave to tell  
 “ you, that if the charge in the letter can  
 “ be brought home to you, it may be attend-  
 “ ed with disagreeable consequences to  
 “ yourself.”

I am, Rev. Sir, &c.

Jam. Hereford.

*Mr. Harries's Reply to the Bishop of Here-  
 ford's Letter to him.*

“ My Lord,

“ I received your Lordship's favour, and  
 “ thank you for the candour with which  
 “ you have communicated to me the false  
 “ allegations of your anonymous correspon-  
 “ dent. I am still more obliged to you, for  
 “ your mild and friendly admonition, and  
 “ your kindness in laying before me the  
 “ consequences of my perseverance in my  
 “ present mode of reading the Liturgy. But  
 “ the omissions I have made are such, as  
 “ upon a long and impartial examination of  
 “ the sacred Scriptures, I have thought ne-  
 “ cessary. And this, my Lord, is the only  
 “ part of the charge against me, that has  
 “ the least foundation in truth. This I own,  
 “ for I dare not prevaricate or temporize

“ —Such

“ —Such parts of the Liturgy, where that  
 “ religious worship, which is only due to  
 “ God the Father of us all, is paid to Jesus  
 “ Christ, or the Holy Ghost, I have for some  
 “ time omitted; nor could I conscientiously  
 “ do otherwise, as they appeared to me  
 “ directly contrary to the general tenour of  
 “ Scripture, which expressly declares the  
 “ Son subordinate to the Father—And ab-  
 “ solutely inconsistent with that form of  
 “ prayer our blessed Saviour himself hath  
 “ left us, and with the manner in which He  
 “ himself always prayed.

“ I have occasionally laid before my con-  
 “ gregation the reasons of my conduct, as  
 “ clearly and particularly as I could. At the  
 “ same time I informed them, it was con-  
 “ trary to my declaration of conformity; and  
 “ assured them, that if on that, or any other  
 “ account, they were dissatisfied with my  
 “ ministry—or if called upon by my supe-  
 “ riors in the church, I would quietly resign  
 “ all my present preferment, nor ever accept  
 “ of any other in the church.

“ It is not without reluctance I shall sepa-  
 “ rate myself from a society of Christians,  
 “ amongst whom I have long resided, and  
 with

“ with whom I am connected by almost  
 “ every tie which can render them dear to  
 “ me—neighbours, tenants, relations, and  
 “ friends, whose esteem and love I flatter  
 “ myself that I possess.

“ It is also late in life to seek another pro-  
 “ fession, and painful to quit one I adopted  
 “ from choice formerly, and is now most  
 “ pleasing to me. But no motive shall in-  
 “ fluence me to depart from my duty to God,  
 “ or to sacrifice my sincerity to my interest.  
 “ Whatever may be my defects or failings,  
 “ if I know my own heart, in my love of  
 “ truth and christian charity it is my desire  
 “ to be inferior to none.

“ I am sensible from your Lordship’s let-  
 “ ter, that I must either conform more  
 “ strictly, or resign. And I hope after what  
 “ I have now said, your Lordship can enter-  
 “ tain no doubt of my choice. On or be-  
 “ fore the 1st day of October next, it is my  
 “ intention to resign the Rectory of Han-  
 “ wood, and the perpetual Curacies of  
 “ Subden and Edgton.”

I am, my Lord, &c.

E. HARRIES.

Independent of those prejudices, which I  
 may be supposed to have towards the line of  
 conduct



conduct which this gentleman has chosen, I cannot but think, that the good sense which is apparent throughout the foregoing letters, and the open, ingenuous account which the writer gives of himself, and of the progress of his convictions, will affect and edify many as much as myself; and that this, together with the similar natural feelings, and just exceptions of others, alike modestly expressed, as quoted throughout this work, cannot fail, if any have not done it already, to put them upon inquiry, what it is, and what authority there can be for any thing, in any part of the christian church, which excludes such conscientious inquirers, and most useful characters, from its communion; and will dispose them, not barely to wish, but to endeavour to have every thing that is evidently and confessedly wrong and unscriptural removed, especially what concerns the Great Object of christian worship; and that it may no longer continue a reproach to Christendom, that they worship a different God from HIM, whom Moses and the prophets, Jesus and his apostles adored: for they certainly did not invoke in their prayers either Christ, or the Holy Spirit.

The

That lowly upright mind, so truly characteristic of a christian, which appears the predominant feature in Mr. Harries, must incline others to think the more highly and respectfully of him ; and even, where differing in opinion, to wish him success, whose labours can be directed to no other end, but to bring many to the knowlege of the one only true God, and to a virtuous life.

He resigned his living of Hanwood, and the two perpetual curacies in October last, agreeably to the notice he had given to his Dioceſan. And ſince that, he has put in execution his intention of forming an unitarian congregation in his own houſe, for his family, and for any that might be diſpoſed to join in worſhip with him.

## S E C T I O N XI.

### *Of Dr. Diſney.*

**I** COME now to the moſt recent, though not leaſt important caſe of a ſeparation from the eſtabliſhed church, by my much loved, valuable friend, and worthy colleague,  
the

the Rev. Dr. *Disney*. His scruples and difficulties I had long imperfectly known, but their magnitude, and his various plans to extricate himself, and effect a thorough relief, I had not any opportunity of being acquainted with, till in autumn last, a singular concurrence of favourable circumstances made an opening, unlooked for before by either of us, for that union of principles and employment, which took place about six months ago.

Nothing can so justly and pathetically describe the previous sufferings of his own mind, and his motives for the part he has now taken, as the little piece which he laid before the public at the time; (*c*) which I shall therefore give in his own words.

Having mentioned his being put upon a more strict inquiry into the agreement of the particular doctrines contained in the formularies of the church of England with the word of God; he proceeds to say:

“ As far as this inquiry went to satisfy  
 “ my understanding concerning these ques-  
 “ tions,

(*c*) It is intitled, “ Reasons for resigning the Rectory  
 “ of Fanton and Vicarage of Swinderby, in Lincolnshire,  
 “ and quitting the Church of England; by John Disney,  
 “ D. D. F. S. A.”—1782.



“ tions, I am free to own, that I was con-  
 “ vinced that many doctrines received as true  
 “ by the church of England, in her Ar-  
 “ ticles and Liturgy, were not only in no  
 “ agreement, but in direct contradiction to  
 “ what appeared to me to be the word of  
 “ God.

“ In this situation, I did not hesitate to  
 “ determine never to accept any further pre-  
 “ ferment in the established church; be-  
 “ cause, I could not conscientiously, and  
 “ without equivocation, declare my assent  
 “ and consent to the thirty-nine Articles and  
 “ Liturgy as by law is required. And this  
 “ determination I have steadily adhered to  
 “ more than once, when offers were made  
 “ me of preferments, in all other respects  
 “ desirable and advantageous to my secular  
 “ interests. For some years I did not ap-  
 “ prehend that my convictions would carry  
 “ me any further. In this supposition,  
 “ however, I have been mistaken. And the  
 “ same principle and reasons which have  
 “ heretofore made me decline to repeat my  
 “ subscription, have forced me to make a  
 “ resignation of my benefices, and of all  
 “ the

“ the advantages I had acquired upon such  
 “ terms.

“ The public service of the Liturgy, or  
 “ book of Common Prayer, holds out for  
 “ its objects of religious worship three dis-  
 “ tinct Beings, there styled, *God the Father,*  
 “ *God the Son, God the Holy Ghost* \* : *one*  
 “ *God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity* † :  
 “ *not one only person, but three persons* ‡.

“ These, and the like expressions, toge-  
 “ ther with repeated and continued addresses  
 “ by prayer to Jesus Christ, and even to the  
 “ Holy Spirit, instead of the one true God,  
 “ who hath no equal, or sharer in the crea-  
 “ tion or government of the world, and who  
 “ alone can hear the prayers of his creatures,  
 “ are, according to my apprehension, in no  
 “ way warranted by the word of God, as  
 “ we read it in the Old and New Testament,  
 “ the only authority upon which, as Chris-  
 “ tians and Protestants, we can depend. But  
 “ on the contrary, they appear to be in di-  
 “ rect opposition to the express declarations  
 “ of that Being, who declared himself, by  
 “ Moses, to be ONE LORD, (Deut. vi. 4.)

N n

“ and

\* Litany.      † Athanasian Creed.      ‡ Collect  
 in Communion Service on Trinity Sunday.

“ and of Christ himself, whose words, bor-  
 “ rowed also from Moses, are, *Thou shalt*  
 “ *worship the Lord thy God, him only shalt*  
 “ *thou serve.* (Luke iv. 8.) And who, on  
 “ all occasions, prayed to, and called upon  
 “ the one God, the common father of all,  
 “ who was *his father and our father, his*  
 “ *God and our God.*” (John xx. 17.)

We have then soon after the account of the various conflicts of his own mind.

“ Under these convictions, the road of  
 “ duty lay plain before me, hard as the mea-  
 “ sure might seem; worldly considerations  
 “ alone remained to prevent me taking the  
 “ direct path, and following the dictates of  
 “ my conscience. And these temptations I  
 “ had in no small degree. The just claims  
 “ of an infant family pleaded hard not to  
 “ be neglected. Nor could I refrain from  
 “ thinking upon their situation with all the  
 “ anxiety of parental affection, and possibly,  
 “ with more solicitude for their temporal  
 “ provision, than the nature of my own diffi-  
 “ culties ought to have admitted. I was  
 “ agreeably situated in the circle of relations,  
 “ and several esteemed friends, and have  
 “ lived in a constant kind intercourse with  
 “ all



“ all my parishioners, among whom I ever  
 “ found my ministry acceptable. I had ex-  
 “ tended my usefulness among my neigh-  
 “ bours in all the ways I was able. Nor  
 “ was I forward to think that I could be  
 “ equally useful under any change of situa-  
 “ tion which removed me to a different  
 “ sphere of action. And I may add, that I  
 “ was not insensible even to an acquired par-  
 “ tiality to the place of my residence, where,  
 “ on many accounts, and for reasons of a  
 “ private nature, I could have wished to  
 “ have continued, to the end of my life, in  
 “ the enjoyment of every desirable accom-  
 “ modation and comfort which a reasonable  
 “ mind could wish for.

“ These considerations deserved some  
 “ thought, and they have had their full  
 “ weight. But they are, after all, conside-  
 “ rations of subordinate and inferior impor-  
 “ tance, when contrasted by the positive  
 “ duty I owe to God, to the Gospel of Je-  
 “ sus, to my Fellow-Christians, and to my-  
 “ self.

“ It is no light matter to profess our re-  
 “ ligion in insincerity and hypocrisy. We  
 “ are enjoined by high authority to worship

“ God in spirit and in truth. And shall  
 “ worldly temptations prevail upon any one,  
 “ who seriously professes himself a Chris-  
 “ tian, to worship any other than the one  
 “ true God, Jehovah, the Father of all,  
 “ while he believes that same self-existent,  
 “ and all-powerful Being to be God, and  
 “ none other besides him? Or, shall we ap-  
 “ proach the great Searcher of hearts with  
 “ that duplicity and deceit which is not to  
 “ be allowed in our dealings and intercourse  
 “ with our fellow men? Or, shall we think  
 “ to amend the matter by addressing our  
 “ *private* prayers to the God and Father of  
 “ our Lord Jesus Christ, in compromise for  
 “ our having *publickly* prayed, in the lan-  
 “ guage of the Church, to a Trinity of  
 “ Gods, or to *the man Christ Jesus*, who  
 “ lived among us, and died upon a cross,  
 “ and who himself renounced all adoration  
 “ and worship? Shall we pray unto a man,  
 “ though the most holy and excellent that  
 “ ever lived on the earth, and thereby ele-  
 “ vate the Creature to the dignity of the  
 “ Creator, and take, from the unchangeable  
 “ and only God and Governor of the world,  
 “ any of that praise and thanksgiving which  
 “ we are enjoined to give unto him, and  
 “ unto

“ unto him only, and which are so peculiarly  
 “ and eminently his own? Or, through  
 “ our earnest desire to continue in the esta-  
 “ blished church, shall we prove our faith  
 “ by mental reservations in the course of  
 “ public worship, so that while we assent to  
 “ one prayer, we reject another, or, possibly,  
 “ divide a third, approving the former and  
 “ rejecting the latter part? Or rather, shall  
 “ we not, in all true simplicity and single-  
 “ ness of heart, as St. Paul writes, *pray with*  
 “ *the spirit and pray with the understand-*  
 “ *ing also?*” (1 Cor. xiv. 15.)

The final result of his conflicts and deliberations with himself, is thus expressed.

“ Thus, after the most deliberate confi-  
 “ deration of all arguments, and after pas-  
 “ sing several painful years in much solici-  
 “ tude and apprehension of incurring the  
 “ displeasure of Almighty God, I had but  
 “ one choice to make, if ever I hoped for  
 “ his approbation. I therefore, in obedi-  
 “ ence to the fullest convictions of my  
 “ mind, have resigned my Ministry and  
 “ preferments in the church of England.

“ I should be much concerned, if any  
 “ good man should so interpret this secession  
 “ of mine from the worship of the church



“ established, as if I thereby, in the most  
 “ remote degree, took upon me to blame,  
 “ or condemn those who may continue their  
 “ ministrations in it, even though their  
 “ opinions on certain doctrines may nearly  
 “ approach to my own.

“ I am sensible, from what has passed  
 “ within myself, how differently similar  
 “ convictions operate in different states of  
 “ the mind, and how very long a man may  
 “ be prevailed upon to go on doing things  
 “ in which he blames himself, from regards  
 “ to a family, or to more distant kindred,  
 “ and to various other local circumstances,  
 “ which cannot easily be explained to others;  
 “ and the still greater difficulty, at a certain  
 “ time of life, of finding bread for a family  
 “ any where else.

“ I am thankful now, I trust I shall al-  
 “ ways be so, whatever be the event as to  
 “ this world, that I have been brought out  
 “ of a situation, in which I went on from  
 “ day to day condemning myself, and that  
 “ it has pleased Divine Providence to lead  
 “ me to a station, where I may still bear  
 “ my testimony to the truth and holiness of  
 “ the Gospel, and have the satisfaction of  
 “ being

“ being united to a congregation of Christi-  
 “ ans, assembling at the chapel in Essex-  
 “ Street, London; where prayer is avow-  
 “ edly made to the only true God, the  
 “ Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and  
 “ where I shall still have more cause to be  
 “ thankful, if my labours may be so far  
 “ successful, that I may be an instrument  
 “ of promoting his sole worship, and at the  
 “ same time serve the great end of the gos-  
 “ pel, in encouraging and exciting myself  
 “ and others to piety and all virtue.”

## S E C T I O N XII.

*Of an Unitarian Society of Christians, at  
Montrose in Scotland.*

**A**LTHOUGH the subject of this sec-  
 tion will not range itself in strict  
 propriety with those preceding, which ex-  
 hibit instances of separation from the esta-  
 blished church of England, on account of  
 its Trinitarian forms of worship; it may  
 nevertheless very well find its place here, as  
 an example of a separation from the esta-

blished church of Scotland, for the like reasons.

It is often matter of surprise and concern to many, that whilst our brethren and fellow subjects, the clergy of the church of Scotland, present us continually with ingenious and learned treatises on natural philosophy, mathematics, history, philology, &c. nothing whatsoever is produced or transpires from that part of our island, which tends to reform their theological system, or to open the eyes of the common people on the grand subject of the Divine Unity; who, at this day, are got no farther than what John Knox and the Divines of that time taught them from Calvin; and though both these were truly great men, and eminent reformers, the fate of Servetus is a melancholy monument of the darkness and intolerance of the church that adheres to their sentiments.

Liberal, rational, and truly excellent Divines, there are many, we are persuaded, among them; who, although uneasy under their subscriptions at entrance into the Ministry, endeavour silently, in their private departments, and parishes, to correct and qualify the rigour of the received orthodoxy.



doxy. In doing this, they have a great advantage over the ministers of the church of England, in not being bound to make use of forms of prayer and invocation, which they disapprove; and may therefore remain in their respective situations without such a degree of self-condemnation. And from the secret light diffused by such worthy persons, we may hope it will be found, that multitudes will be prepared to disclaim the worship of any other person as God, but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the omnipotent Creator and Governor of the universe; whenever that Great Truth is plainly and properly held forth, and recommended to them.

Under this general state of things, in that country, it gives peculiar satisfaction to behold rising among them, a society of professed, unitarian christians, such as never before appeared there.

It took its rise from a (*d*) person engaged in secular affairs; but who notwithstanding has found time to accomplish himself in different parts of literature, and particularly in every thing tending to illustrate the sacred writings;

(*d*) Mr. William Christie, Jun. Merchant at Montrose.

writings; and with this view chiefly, has amassed a large well chosen library, such as seldom falls to the lot of a private person.

One much less qualified than this gentleman, may easily provide himself with useful printed discourses, and suitable precomposed forms of prayer, by which a christian audience may be edified; and may still follow his worldly occupation six days, while on the Lord's day he officiates as a christian minister; where one of greater learning and abilities cannot be procured.

The unreformed condition of the whole christian world, in the point of God's true worship, will, it is probable, make it more and more necessary for private christians to have recourse to such expedients of gathering congregations among themselves, with whom to join in worship. For vast bodies of men reform slowly. In the mean time, it is the duty of individuals, not to wait for their movements, but quietly to do the work for themselves, (*e*) where they cannot  
with

(*e*) There is something so weighty, and so truly apostolical in Dr. Priestley's "exhortation to all *unitarians*,  
" whether

with a safe conscience frequent the established worship; which perhaps is the only way by which a general reformation in such important points can be effected.

Mr. *Christie* at *Montrose*, was happy, when he found it necessary to withdraw from the worship of the established church, to find others in the place, of the like unitarian sentiments with himself. There is a short account which the society gives of itself, by way of preface to a collection of hymns for their use; which is here given at length.

“ The following collection of Hymns  
 “ and Psalms, was made (as the (*f*) title-  
 page

“ whether they be members of the established church, or  
 “ of any society of Dissenters,” contained in one of his valuable practical tracts, that I would here earnestly recommend it to every one’s perusal. It is in the last edition, printed at Birmingham, 1782, of his “ Appeal to  
 “ the serious and candid Professors of Christianity,” p. 27 to 30. The whole of this little book is invaluable, and should be in the hands of every christian.

(*f*) The title runs thus: “ A Collection of Hymns  
 “ and Psalms for public worship; first published for the  
 “ use of Unitarians in England, and now reprinted, with  
 “ a Supplement, for the Use of the Unitarian Society,  
 “ Montrose. *The hour cometh, and now is, when the true*  
 “ *worshippers*



“ page expresses it) for the use of Unitarians  
 “ in England; and in particular, for the  
 “ accommodation of the Unitarian congrega-  
 “ tion, at Effex-street chapel, in the  
 “ Strand, London; over which Mr. Lind-  
 “ sey, late Vicar of Catterick in York-  
 “ shire, presides. His resignation of his  
 “ church-preferment was followed by  
 “ that of the learned Mr. Jebb of Cam-  
 “ bridge; and by that of the Rev. Mr.  
 “ Evanston of Tewkesbury, another sufferer  
 “ for the sake of conscience, although his  
 “ case is not so generally known with us as  
 “ that of his two brethren. Thus within  
 “ this last half score of years, we have seen,  
 “ even in these times of dissipation and dege-  
 “ neracy, three \* clergymen of learning,  
 “ knowlege, and virtue, resign their prefer-  
 “ ments, and cast themselves upon the provi-  
 “ dence of God, rather than continue to  
 “ officiate

“ *worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth:*  
 “ *for the Father seeketh such to worship him.—JESUS.*”  
 Dundee: Printed for the Proprietors. 1783.

\* “ Mr. Evanston underwent a prosecution for making  
 “ alterations in the liturgy. In this respect his case was  
 “ different from that of his two reverend brethren.”

“ officiate in a church where unscriptural  
 “ articles of faith were imposed, and unscriptural  
 “ forms of worship made use of.

“ From motives of a like kind with those  
 “ that actuated the respectable and worthy  
 “ gentlemen before mentioned, several of  
 “ the members that now compose the Unitarian  
 “ society of Montrose, found themselves under a necessity of departing from  
 “ the different sects and parties they formerly belonged to. Fully convinced,  
 “ that the God and Father of our Lord  
 “ Jesus Christ, is alone the only living and  
 “ true God, they deemed it highly incongruous to remain any longer in those religious  
 “ societies, where, besides this God  
 “ and Father, two other persons, or intelligent agents, were acknowledged as the  
 “ supreme God, and equal with the Father  
 “ in every respect.

“ For some time they were deprived of  
 “ the benefit of public worship; until, at  
 “ last, becoming acquainted with one another’s situation and sentiments, they judged it expedient to assemble together for  
 “ the performance of this necessary duty.—

“ This

“ This short preface does not afford room,  
 “ either to enter into a defence of their own  
 “ opinions, or a confutation of those of  
 “ their opponents : This was done at con-  
 “ siderable length in a series of discourses,  
 “ that were delivered when the society was  
 “ made public.

“ To Mr. Lindsey’s collection, it has  
 “ been thought proper to add a supplement,  
 “ copied from Dr. Watts’s Psalms and  
 “ Hymns, with some small variations and  
 “ transpositions. From the compositions  
 “ of this pious writer, the greatest part of  
 “ Mr. Lindsey’s collection is also taken.  
 “ At the time Dr. Watts wrote these devo-  
 “ tional pieces, he was a rigid Trinitarian ;  
 “ and, of consequence, some of his psalms,  
 “ and a great many of his hymns, are so  
 “ strongly marked with the peculiarities of  
 “ that system, that they are altogether unfit  
 “ to be used in an Unitarian congregation.  
 “ Before his death, however, the Doctor  
 “ saw reason to moderate his sentiments ;  
 “ and in some of his last publications, ex-  
 “ pressed himself in such a doubtful, hesi-  
 “ tating manner ; and found himself oblig-  
 “ ed,



“ ed, from his natural candour, to make  
 “ such concessions to the Unitarians, and to  
 “ approach so near their system, that he lost  
 “ his credit considerably with some of the  
 “ friends of pretended orthodoxy.”

In a letter from Montrose, dated March 13, 1783, are the following particulars relating to this Society.

“ Our Society has now been of about  
 “ eighteen months standing. For several  
 “ months after its commencement, we kept  
 “ our meetings in a great measure private;  
 “ admitting few spectators. But about the  
 “ middle of the last summer, it was made  
 “ accessible to all without exception. We  
 “ administer the Lord's supper the first  
 “ Lord's day of every month, in a plain and  
 “ simple form. As there are several Anti-  
 “ pædobaptists amongst us, every member  
 “ of our Society has it in his option, to  
 “ baptize his children when young, or to  
 “ defer that ceremony till they arrive at  
 “ years of discretion. We admit alike Ari-  
 “ ans and Socinians, leaving every one to  
 “ judge and determine for himself as to the  
 “ preexistence, &c. but we are all fixed  
 “ and

“ and determined concerning the Divine  
 “ Unity, and the supreme Godhead, and  
 “ unequalled dignity of the Father.”

IT would be an injury to the church of Scotland, not to mention here the liberal spirit that appeared among them a few years ago; when a most worthy, able, and learned person, aggrieved by the stipulations he had entered into on being admitted to the Ministry, after his case and complaint had undergone some discussion in the Presbytery of *Stranraer*, and Synod of Galloway, was at last admitted to make the following declaration, to relieve his mind; which now stands upon record in the books of the Presbytery at *Stranraer*.

“ I, Andrew Ross, *Minister of the Gospel in the parish of Inch*, (for the exoneration of my conscience, more particularly with respect to the terms of Ministerial communion enjoined by this Church) hereby declare, That I firmly adhere to the fundamental principles of the Protestant Religion, namely that the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the only Rule of faith and practice; that the exercise of private judgment is the  
 undoubted

*undoubted right and duty of every christian, and of every christian Minister, and that it is the best means of discovering the true sense of Scripture ; that the Lord Jesus Christ is appointed the sole head and lawgiver of his church, and the only Master in religion. And I also declare, that I reject all doctrines and practices, that are inconsistent with these principles, as witness my hand this third day of January, 1776."*

Andrew Rofs.

It is also to be mentioned, to the honour of the parishioners of *Inch*, that they unanimously presented a Petition, dated April 24, 1775, to the Presbytery of *Stranraer*, praying that their Minister *might be allowed to continue among them upon his own terms*, and attesting his excellent, unspotted character, and faithful, laborious discharge of his duty among them.

Their Petition stands thus in the Minutes of the Proceedings of the Presbytery.

“ The Parishioners of *Inch* gave in a Petition to the Presbytery, expressing their high regard for Mr. Rofs, their Minister, the tenor whereof follows.”

O o

*Inch*,



Inch, 24 April, 1775.

“ To the Rev. the Moderator, and re-  
 “ manent members of the presbytery of  
 “ Stranraer, the Petition of the under sub-  
 “ sscribers, being all indwellers, elders, and  
 “ other parishioners in the parish of Inch,  
 “ in behalf of the Rev. Mr. Andrew Ross,  
 “ Minister of the said parish, humbly shew-  
 “ eth,

“ *That Mr. Andrew Ross, their present*  
 “ *Minister, has been Rector of this parish*  
 “ *for these twelve years, during all which*  
 “ *time he has done his duty among them like*  
 “ *a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, ever*  
 “ *labouring for their welfare, and endearing*  
 “ *himself to his flock by his attentive and*  
 “ *friendly behaviour; That they know him*  
 “ *to be a conscientious and upright man, wor-*  
 “ *thy of the character he bears, and emi-*  
 “ *nently useful in the country where he resides;*  
 “ *That it is with the greatest concern they*  
 “ *see differences arising between him and his*  
 “ *brethren about points which they humbly*  
 “ *think need not be so exactly insisted upon as*  
 “ *they are; That as nothing, but conscience,*  
 “ *they very well know, has induced their*  
 “ *minister to move in these points, they think*  
 “ *it*

“ it their duty also, to give their testimony to  
 “ the same cause, and to declare their joint  
 “ opinion of the subject now in debate, so far  
 “ as their lights serve them; They scruple  
 “ not, nay they glory to declare, that it is  
 “ their firm belief, that the Scriptures of  
 “ God are a sufficient standard to men both of  
 “ faith and practice; they are sufficient for  
 “ salvation in the sight of God, and much  
 “ more should they be deemed sufficient for  
 “ christian communion in the sight of men.  
 “ It is their opinion that no church upon  
 “ earth has a right to put any thing in place  
 “ of the Scriptures, or to require a subscrip-  
 “ tion from their ministers to any thing but  
 “ the Scriptures: They think that every  
 “ church should leave its members free to  
 “ search the Scriptures, and not to bind them  
 “ down for ever to one sense of them. In all  
 “ these points they agree most cordially with  
 “ their minister, and will be happy, extremely  
 “ happy to live with him upon these terms.”

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